FORMATION OF SCHOLARS: SOCIALIZATION OF DOCTORAL STUDENTS OF COLOR IN ONE SUMMER PROGRAM

BY

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ABSTRACT

This case study examines socialization to and through the first-year for new doctoral students of color through the lens of a summer transition program for these students. The first year of graduate study remains an important focus of research for addressing challenges in the socialization to and through PhD programs. Forty to seventy per cent of all students leave their doctoral program; and up to 40% of those exit within the first year (Gardner, 2009). As such, a focus on the challenges of acclimating to graduate life and subsequent improvement strategies during students' first year is warranted.

Recent work points to the role of graduate student centers and equity administrators in the recruitment and retention of students of color (Baber, 2015; Griffin & Muniz, 2011; Mastroieni, 2014). Through recruitment initiatives, many students of color engage in programs (e.g., conferences, graduate school fairs, and institution-sponsored recruitment weekends) aimed at assisting them through the application process and helping them to develop a connection at the university of their graduate study (Griffin & Muniz, 2011). The Summer Doctoral Transition Initiative (SDTI) at Mid-West State University (MSU) is a summer orientation program that provides a 9-week orientation to graduate school life and seeks to address many of the transition challenges faced by doctoral students of color at Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs). Moving beyond studies that analyze the preparation for graduate school and support enacted once a degree program formally begins in the fall, this study adds to the socialization literature for doctoral students of color by closely examining a university-wide summer program for doctoral students of color. In particular, this work examines the experiences and

perceptions of the 2014 cohort of students—the cohort to most recently complete their first year of study.

Utilizing Weidman, Twale, and Stein's (2006) Graduate Student Socialization theory as a framework, this study sheds light on the history and evolution of the SDTI program, analyzes the role of SDTI in the socialization of doctoral students of color to and through the first year, and examines the ways students are acclimated to the values, expectations, and culture of graduate education. To this end, case study interviews of 17 students, 6 staff members, and 3 faculty members were conducted over a 5 month period. Analysis of program documents occurred over a 5 month period. Findings suggest that how faculty and staff view SDTI influences the ways in which the program is carried out. Staff utilized the program as a conduit to pass on information, especially that related to the hidden curriculum in graduate education. Faculty and staff both saw SDTI as an opportunity for students to build a network or community of peers to support each other. Findings suggest that prior to the summer, students perceived that interaction with faculty would be high; however, experiences among Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) and Social Science, Humanities, Education, and Business (SHEB) students varied. In thinking about impact, students in the program reported experiencing a shift in many forms of identity that challenged who they thought they were, and how they negotiated the new environment and academic space. As students reflected on their journey during the first year of study, they discussed the importance of having peers who understood the doctoral journey and that the support they received could mean the difference between leaving and staying. While not all students felt that they developed a strong sense of community, all student participants reported appreciating their time in the

program and enjoyed positive outcomes as a result. Recommendations and implications are offered for the institution, SDTI, and the field as a whole.

To my participants, for allowing me access to their minds and lives and for showing me the true spirit of community. You all really showed up to make this study a reality;

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

What influenced my success? I think just the support of other folks going through the same process. You know, when you walk across campus and you see somebody who was in your [Summer Doctoral Transition Initiative] cohort and you got both of you looking stressed out, you just give each other a nod like, "Yeah I am going through it too." You know what I'm saying?

- Chris

Background

In the above vignette, Chris, an African American male, explains how community matters to him. As a doctoral student of color, participating in the Summer Doctoral Transition Initiative (SDTI), Chris viewed the initiative as providing a support network, access to key information such as jobs, and mentors and advanced students to look up to, all factors that he perceived as influencing his success in his first year at Midwest State University (MSU), a Predominantly White University (PWI). The purpose of this study is to examine the history and enactment of institutional support through a program for new doctoral students of color, and what doctoral student participants perceived the role of the program to be in their socialization to and through their first year of study.

Examining the acclimation to doctoral degree programs and how an institution responds to their perceived needs provides insight into how students are socialized and integrated into their departments and into the university as a whole. Students preexisting values, identities, and experiences all impact socialization experiences (Weideman, Twale, & Stein, 2001). The experiences of students of color have shown that even with high levels of achievement (such as gaining entry into doctoral programs), conditions are

not as equal as they appear to be and "forms of inequity and discrimination can be subtle and harder to see" (Solorzano, 1998, p.132).

Despite increased participation in higher education, including a 70% increase over the past two decades (National Science Foundation, 2013), students of color remain underrepresented. According to the National Academy of Sciences (2011) report on expanding underrepresented minority participation, African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans/Pacific Islanders are the most rapidly growing populations in the United States; nonetheless, they remain seriously underrepresented in doctoral degree programs. For the purposes of this study, students of color include African Americans, Latinos (Hispanic), Native Americans and Hawaiian/ Pacific Islanders, all of whom are considered underrepresented in doctoral education in accordance with the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 (United States Department of Education, 2008). The percentage of African American, Hispanic, and Native American/Pacific Islander students who are obtaining doctoral degrees has grown over a twenty-year period, from 10% in 1993 to 13% in 2013. When disaggregated, the numbers vary by population (African American 4.5% to 6.4%, Hispanic 3.4 % to 6.3%, Native American/Pacific Islander .40% to .35 %). Even with a nearly 100% increase, with the exception of Native American/Pacific Islander, the total numbers of doctoral recipients of color drastically lag behind other groups, as Whites earned 87% of the PhD among all U.S Citizens (National Science Foundation, 2013).

Expanding the pipeline of scholars of color in doctoral programs remains a concern for graduate education and society at large, for reasons beyond number counting efforts and capitalizing on the human talent pool. Correcting issues such as the

proportionally lower number of doctoral recipients of color can work towards equity in graduate education and in leadership roles in society. A paucity of diverse talent in graduate education ultimately leads to a deficit in diverse knowledge production and ways of knowing. When a variety of minds work on the nation's most pressing issues, the quality of knowledge is enhanced and new perspectives develop in both research and practice (Leggon & Pearson Jr, 2009). Underrepresentation within faculty and industry leadership is "not only socially unjust but detrimental to society's long-term vitality" (Maton & Hrabowski, 2004, September, p.1).

For decades, scholars have wrestled with the question of how to improve equity and opportunity for students of color. Scholars such as Malcolm (1990) argued that barriers in, for example, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) to students of color can be linked back to practices whose roots largely derive from Western, European cultural sources. Malcolm posits that while other cultures have also made significant contributions, they are not generally the focus of science today. The result is that differential opportunities are provided to students based on marginalized identities. The likelihood that numbers will change remains dismal as the number "of Black Americans in the graduate pipeline is far below what is needed to affect doctorate output" (Malcolm, 1990, p. 249). And yet, twenty-five years after the publication of this work, the prognosis may yet be the same. Students of color who gain entry into doctoral programs with strong academic credentials, but who experience challenges, provide evidence that factors other than preparation and ability work to limit achievement and success.

The first year of graduate study remains an important focus of research for

addressing challenges in the acclimation to and matriculation through graduate study. Rapp and Golde (2008) posit that there are two major reasons researchers should focus on the first year of study in an effort to improve doctoral degree completion. First, 40-70% of all students leave their doctoral program; second, up to 40% exit within the first year (Gardner, 2009). Given the substantial number of students who do not make it through the first year, scholarship on the challenges of acclimating to graduate life and subsequent improvement strategies is warranted.

Of those who did not persist in doctoral study, among the many factors included an inability to find mentors and gain support early on within the department (Herzig, 2002; Lovitts, 2001). For those who made it, the literature points to the critical nature of faculty mentorship for successful socialization and matriculation through to graduation for doctoral students in general (Nettles & Millet, 2006), as well as for students of color in particular (Brown, Davis, & McClendon, 1999; Felder, 2010; Williams, 2013). Effective mentorship has been shown to improve a sense of belonging in the department (Wood & Viernes Turner, 2015), to influence persistence (Herzig, 2004), and to enhance a sense of connection to research and the profession (Davidson & Foster-Johnson, 2001)—all critical outcomes of socialization. If a positive mentoring relationship develops, the students are able to see themselves in a similar role (Wood & Viernes Turner, 2015). For graduate students of color, feelings of isolation and marginalization can inhibit research identity development and create a sense of being unwelcome (Davidson & Foster-Johnson, 2001; Simpson, 2008). These serve as threats to high levels of engagement and acclimation to the role of a graduate student and researcher. Isolation from peers and feelings of uncertainty are all factors that have historically resulted in a

negative perception by faculty (Herzig, 2002; King, 1995).

Statement of the Problem

Socialization in graduate education is the process by which a student gains insight, knowledge, and an understanding of the norms and values of the role and profession to which they aspire (Weidman, Twale, & Stein, 2001). Thus, practices that occur inside and outside of a department that help build community between doctoral students of color and reflect cultural norms are important. Students often deal with multiple forms of marginalized identities including class, gender, and sexuality. These intersecting identities mediate how students experience socialization and doctoral study, which often consists of white, traditional ideology and norms (Gardner, 2008; Gonzalez, 2007; Solorzano, 1998).

Socialization concerns have given rise to institutional efforts to improve pathways for students of color by challenging leaders to move beyond rhetoric to action. In so doing, institutions may involve the entire institutional teaching/mentoring community in the work of creating equity by addressing barriers related to race/ethnicity (Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2005). Thus, there is a need to examine support for student social and professional development, including the institution's planned socialization practices, and their use of resources to enhance student learning; complementing this focus is a concern for how students interpret the institution's efforts. Also needing attention are the cultural differences that students bring to the department; these differences require a welcoming climate that engages all students of color in order to thrive. While studying socialization efforts helps educators to understand the complex

dynamics of the doctoral degree process, there are still gaps related to race that scholars have sought to address.

A major criticism of traditional socialization practices is that they strip cultural identity from doctoral students of color while attempting to have them conform to white ideals and standards (Gonzalez, 2006). The result can leave students vulnerable to feelings of isolation as they struggle to accept this new majority-focused paradigm. Understanding the need to critically examine the role of multiple marginalized identities in the socialization process, scholars have called for a reconceptualization of socialization, one that honors interactive processes culturally relevant for students of color (Cheatham & Phelps, 1995; Gonzalez, 2005; Johnson, Morelon-Quainoo, Santiague, & Winkle-Wagner, 2010; Simpson, 2008; Taylor & Antony, 2000).

When departments connect with university equity partners, cultural perspectives are more likely honored and diversity efforts are reinforced as an institutional responsibility (Bauman, Bustillos, Bensimon, & Bartell, 2005). For students of color who participate in targeted programming, the department may not even be the first point of contact in socialization efforts. Recent work points to the role of graduate student centers and equity administrators in the recruitment and retention of students of color (Baber, 2015; Griffin & Muniz, 2011; Mastroieni, 2014). Graduate equity administrators represent an institutional commitment to focus on and improve the recruitment and retention of students of color. Through recruitment initiatives, many students of color engage in programs (conferences, graduate school fairs, institution sponsored recruitment weekends) aimed at assisting them through the application process and helping them develop a connection at the university of their graduate study (Griffin & Muniz, 2011).

Among the many advantages of working with administrators in the service of students are partnerships for funding. Through these collaborations, administrators can send signals about the importance of the quality of doctoral education (Walker, Golde, Jones, Bueschel, & Hutchings, 2008).

Many programs and services for doctoral students of color are aimed at improving the pipeline and graduate experience. Several initiatives have focused on improving the socialization experiences for doctoral students of color and addressing their academic and social challenges. Programs that combine funding with structural and social support are successful at producing graduates (Herzig, 2004). Such programs provide opportunities for students to interact with peers and faculty in their departments. During the 1980s and 1990s, a host of programs were developed to strengthen the pipeline of doctoral students of color. Organizations such as the Council of Graduate Schools' "PhD Completion Project," the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation's Graduate Education Initiative, the Ford Foundation, the Pew Charitable Trusts, and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation have donated millions of dollars to doctoral degree granting institutions across the country to implement strategies and procedures designed to stimulate the pipeline of doctoral students of color (Hill, Castillo, Hgu, & Pepion, 1999; Erhenberg, Zuckerman, Groen, & Brucker, 2009). Even though these programs have supported the development, socialization, and matriculation of students of color (Leggon & Pearson Jr, 2009), the lack of examination in some initiatives threatens scalability efforts (George-Jackson & Rincon, 2011). Typically, students enter into and transition through these programs when the semester has already begun. A program that enacts a different model is the Summer Doctoral Transition Initiative.

In recent years, increased attention has been paid to doctoral degree matriculation, persistence, and completion as evidenced by such projects and programs as the Council of Graduate Schools "Ph.D. Completion Project," the Meyerheroff Scholars Program at the University of Maryland Baltimore County, and the Alfred P. Sloan Scholars Program and Centers for Mentoring Excellence. Yet participation and completion for students of color still lag behind that of their majority student counterparts.

As research studies and improvement strategies focus on these areas, there remains a paucity of research on socialization initiatives for new doctoral students of color and the ways universities and departments may cooperate to assist students of color in the transition to and through the first year of doctoral study. Moving beyond preparation for graduate school and support enacted once a degree program has formally begun in the fall, this study adds to the literature on support for doctoral students of color by examining their perspectives on a program offered during the summer to those who have accepted their offer of admission and will start in the fall. This study also adds to the literature on graduate diversity administrators and their perceived role in the socialization of doctoral students; it provides a view of their unique insights into professional development for advanced doctoral students, particularly those who go on to serve as staff for the program. To examine this program, I will use case study methods and consider Midwest State University's SDTI program as a critical case study that will provide insight into its history, practices, and perceived role in doctoral students of color's experiences.

Research Questions

The following research questions guide the direction of this study:

1. What are the historical and contextual factors that led to the development of the Summer Doctoral Transition Initiative (SDTI)?
    a. How have key practices and components evolved over the years?

2. How do faculty, graduate administrators, and SDTI staff view SDTI?
    b. What are the ways in which faculty, graduate administrators, and SDTI staff describe the purpose and mission of SDTI?

3. What is the perceived influence of SDTI on the socialization to and through the first-year of doctoral study?
    a. How do members of the 2014 cohort describe their time as SDTI fellows?
    b. How do 2014 cohort members perceive the influence of SDTI on the acclimation to doctoral study?
    c. What is the perceived role of SDTI on the ability to navigate the first year of doctoral study?

Case Study: Summer Doctoral Transition Initiative

The Summer Doctoral Transition Initiative (SDTI), developed in 1999, was a program designed to provide students new to Mid-West University an opportunity to acclimate to graduate student life. SDTI served students underrepresented in graduate education. The purpose of the program was to help doctoral students acclimate to graduate life and develop community with faculty and peers from across the university. Situated within the context of the program were workshops designed to begin the process of socialization to academia and life as a graduate student.

Students who had accepted their offer of admission to Mid-West University and were to begin formal coursework in the fall semester arrived to campus in June to

participate in the SDTI program. Participants spent the summer engaged in research with their faculty advisor or a faculty designee in their home department. In addition to early research opportunities, students were engaged in seminars on professional development, research writing, and the culture of graduate school. Critical to the development of SDTI is the time frame in which the program was carried out. SDTI occurs during the summer, a time when students are typically spending time with loved ones or working in order to save money for the school year. Students arrived to campus in June, prior to the start of their first semester. Housing was provided in an on-campus, privately-owned residence hall, and a monetary stipend was spread out over the course of the summer.

SDTI was unique in that it was one of a few programs of its kind that addressed the unique challenges for students of color new to doctoral education during the summer months. Students who participated in SDTI were students who had already gained admission to a graduate program based on a proven record of academic success in undergraduate, master's programs, participation in undergraduate research programs, and service in professional occupations. Furthermore, students received independent study credit for engaging in research with their faculty advisor or department while simultaneously participating in seminars and social events carried out by SDTI staff, who were advanced graduate students or recent graduates of MSU.

Studying institutional policy and practices allows for the opportunity to examine how participants in particular sites, in this case SDTI, enact this program in everyday life. McCarty (2011) suggests that learning occurs through social interaction, and that "policy is processual, dynamic, and in motion" (p. 2), and can be inferred from practices and beliefs that facilitate cultural production through social practices. Socialization is also

considered a practice of power that operates at multiple, intersectional levels: face to face, in local communities of practice, and including larger forces that deliberately seek to influence the behavior of others (McCarty, 2011). To this end, understanding the ways that SDTI, as a program, influences the experiences of doctoral students of color from the perspective of the student participants will provide a lens to understanding the socialization experiences moving toward and in the first year of graduate study.

Significance

University efforts for students of color, specifically at the undergraduate level, are considered "bridge." Such programs often take the view that students need to be "fixed" or brought up to an academic standard in order to be prepared for the next stage of education (Colyar, 2011). Scholars have found that, while helpful, bridge programs often operate with a deficit-thinking approach (Colyar, 2011). SDTI was offered during the summer, and students who applied to doctoral programs were admitted by faculty who decided that the students were academically capable of exceling in the program and contributing valuable research to the profession. Students who participate in SDTI accepted offers of admission to graduate school, and thus had been determined as worthy and prepared by a department. This project contributes to the socialization narrative by re-conceptualizing the new "bridge" as one in which resource development and community building are placed at the forefront. It provides an example of one longstanding initiative that aimed to support the development of doctoral students of color prior to the start of the first fall semester and, in addition, examines students' understanding of this program as they proceeded through the first year of doctoral study.

Examining the ways in which graduate diversity administrators at one institution supported students after the admission process provides a lens for other programs who seek to develop intra-institutional partnerships with faculty. Much of the literature is solely focused on the ways in which faculty work with graduate students of color; however, studies suggest that diversity administrative support personnel are a critical point of contact as students matriculate through the university (Griffin & Munoz, 2011). Inclusion and support should be a university responsibility, and this work will provide a context for how that conversation can be started and how structures can be put in place that honor what students bring with them, but also arm them with additional tools that support success in doctoral programs.

Excellence is determined by collaborative partnerships with change agents that have a hand in the socialization process. This work adds to the body of empirical research on the ways in which graduate diversity administrators work collaboratively in the service of equity and excellence in graduate education. Universities that do this well are more likely to have students who are successful in progressing through the first year and beyond (Takuno, 2008). Therefore, it is important to understand socialization in graduate education from the perspective of the students. Implications for graduate colleges will offer insight into the views of doctoral students with complex identities and offer insight into ways of supporting students of color at PWIs.

Organization of the Dissertation

Chapter two of this dissertation provides a brief literature review of graduate students in transition, socialization for doctoral students of color, and support for the transition and first year. Chapter three details methods used in carrying out this work and role of the

researcher. Chapter four provides the history, context, and development of SDTI. Chapter five describes the mission and purpose of the program as understood by the staff and faculty who make the program what it is, while chapter six describes how students perceive the impact of SDTI on their transition to and through the first year. The concluding chapter includes discussion, implications, limitations, and conclusions.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter two is a literature review and the review and synthesis will be focused on the transition to doctoral education, socialization experiences for doctoral students of color, and strategies for support in the first year and beyond. Following the literature review, I will critique the literature that has been collected and synthesized and discuss the importance of including historical and contextual background in the development of the study. To conclude this chapter, I will discuss socialization, the theoretical framework that guides and provides grounding for this work.

Methods of Literature Search

To conduct this review, I used a collection of empirical research articles, books, dissertations, monographs, professional association newsletters, and primary source materials such as research reports and demographic databases. To access these sources, I utilized a variety of databases through the library website including ProQuest Dissertations, EBSCOhost, Education Resources and Information Center (ERIC), and Scopus. Searches were performed that are relevant to the dissertation topic. The following key terms were used to obtain articles for this review: graduate students, doctoral students at predominantly white campuses, socialization of doctoral students, doctoral education, doctoral students of color, socialization, graduate students and retention programs, first-year and doctoral students, transition and graduate students, and mentorship and graduate students. Additional search phrases such as doctoral students and community, peer networks, and students of color and collectivism were added later based on expansion of the literature review after data collection. Only studies that included doctoral students were included in this review.

Transition to Doctoral Study

Research on the socialization in the transition to doctoral students is important for many reasons. Doctoral education is the highest research degree, takes the most time, and per student may require the most resources. Time to degree is typically longer for doctoral students and doctoral students are more likely to come to school with a greater set of circumstances that influence transition such as partners, children, age, time separated from the educational environment, finances, among others (Terre, 2001; Tukuno, 2008). In addition, the attrition rate, which is an average of 50%, makes this a priority worthy of concern. Doctoral students are more likely to enter graduate school with a loss of power and a loss of identity, trying to fit with students who are different stages than themselves (Terre, 2001). Many students begin their doctoral journey years after receipt of the baccalaureate degree. In education, for example, the average age of doctoral degree recipients is 42 (Rapp & Golde, 2008).

The challenges faced by doctoral students vary as the type of department, university, climate, expectations, and identity of students are different. The transition occurs as students change roles from adults with professional careers return to campus life and life as a student. In a study of doctoral student attrition in 56 departments at one institution, Lott, Gardner, and Powers (2009) looked at the attrition rate over time, the relationship between various demographics and attrition, and discipline and attrition. They found that the odds of attrition are three times higher in year one than in years 3-7 and those students younger than 25 are more likely to drop out than students 25-29 when they first enter doctoral education. This underscores the importance of the transition, as

the odds for attrition are the greatest in the first year. Students grapple with many factors that influence and mediate interaction with a new graduate environment.

Success in graduate school is mediated by the extent to which students are academically and socially integrated into campus and departmental life. Academic integration is the strong development of affiliation with the academic environment (Simpson, 2008). This includes faculty, staff, and peers. Social integration are the informal out- of classroom experiences that include the entire campus environment (Golde, 2000). Understanding and achieving these goals, for many doctoral students, occur with little to no guidance (Rapp & Golde, 2008). Ball (2007) in a study on factors that characterized the academic experiences of first-year graduate students found that graduate students struggled with the rigor of course work requirements, isolation, separating themselves from friends, lack of connection with the graduate school community, and financial stress. Financial concerns manifested in things that required payment outside of tuition and fees, which were especially salient for participants helping family while in school (Ball, 2007; see also Gasman, Hirschfield, & Vultaggio, 2008; Gardner & Holley, 2011). Additional concerns came in the form of stress from a lack of clear external expectations, and imposter syndrome.

Testing Tinto's framework of doctoral student attrition and Rudenstien's framework for doctoral student departure, Golde (2000) used a multiple case study approach to elucidate the reasons why students decide to leave the doctoral process. It was found that academic reasons were central in the decision to leave, but not the sole reason. Academic reasons include lack of institutional fit, disconnection from the program or department, and dissolution from the advisor relationship. In this study students who resisted molding

into a faculty image described feeling like an outsider. Social integration was also important as Golde (2000) found that peer interaction of lack thereof could enhance or inhibit engagement. Other life events also took students off track and influence attrition such as taking a job and while social integration alone may not be the sole reason a student chooses to leave, poor academic integration was found to have a larger impact on attrition.

Transition for Doctoral Students of Color

Students of color face unique challenges when transitioning to doctoral study. Academic and social challenges and feelings of isolation and marginalization work in inhibit sense of belonging and acclimation in doctoral programs (Gardner, 2008; Johnson, Morelon-Quainoo, Santigue, & Winkle-Wagner, 2010; Lott, Gardner, & Powers, 2009; Simpson, 2008; Tai & Wyss, 2010). Gasman, Hirschfield, & Vultaggio (2008), in their study of the support experiences of African American doctoral students in education at an ivy-league school, found that the first year of doctoral study was described as difficult, frustrating, expensive, yet rewarding at times. A few participants described interacting with people from many backgrounds, however, for others the first year was characterized by isolation and lack of support by faculty and peers with no support systems. Most students leaned on the advisor relationship to provide much needed support and be informed of what was needed to succeed in graduate studies. Learning to navigate and find sources of information was one of the most difficult processes during the first year (Gasman, Hirschfield, & Vultaggio, 2008).

An awareness of the environmental factors that exist for graduate students of color and how they perceive those factors is integral to transition and persistence in graduate

school (Simpson, 2008). In a study of identity formation in graduate students of color in research laboratories, it was found that identity formation exists as a result of academic and social integration (Malone & Barbarino, 2008). Challenges related to acclimation also exist for students making the transition from universities that have a mission to serve students of color (such as HBCU's) to PWI's. For graduate students of color, feelings of isolation and marginality can inhibit research identity development and create unwelcome feelings. In a study of students of color who earned PhD's, challenges related to preparation for the professoriate were identified (MacLachlan, 2006). It was found that many students experienced culture shock when transitioning from and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU's) to PWI's. There was tension between being a graduate student and being a student of color. Most did not feel academic preparation was an issue and expressed frustration with racialized experiences in the department (MacLachlan, 2006). Socialization to doctoral study is identified as a way to examine the process and practices that facilitate the extent to which students are socially and academically integrated into doctoral study.

Socialization Experiences for Doctoral Students of Color

Socialization is the process by which students acquire knowledge about, interest in, attitudes and values, develop identity, knowledge, and culture of graduate study and the broader professional field (Stein & Weidman, 1989). Studies that have focused on socialization (Baird, 1993; Nettles & Millet, 2006; Gardner, 2008) identify positive interactions with faculty and peers as a key component of the socialization process that reduces attrition. Studies show that negative interactions and practices enacted by White faculty and peers such as withholding course materials, making racist comments in class,

and restricting students of color from study groups have historically sent a message that this group is not welcome (O'Connor, 2002). These are negative and invalidating experiences that could be perceived as microaggressions. Sue (2010) describes microaggressions as "the everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership" (pg, 3). Students of color who experience microaggressions often feel disconnected from the department and experience negative feelings about their overall experience in graduate education. Overall, these forms of racial trauma prevent positive socialization outcomes (Troung & Museus, 2012). Regardless of race/ethnicity, faculty who are allies, are aware of barriers and have an active interest in students' academic and social well-being help students negotiate barriers and foster positive relationships (Gasman, Gerstl-Pepin, Anderson-Thompkins, Rasheed, & Hathaway, 2004).

Ellis (2001) conducted a qualitative study to determine if there are any discernable differences for students of color in graduate school socialization, satisfaction with graduate study, and commitment to the doctoral degree. She discovered that race was a salient factor in the doctoral student experience. Of primary concern to the students were faculty's inability to deal openly with issues of race and lack of respect for differences. When faced with issues of race and lack of respect for differences, students engage in self-censorship, questions whether or not they fit into a program, and negotiate when to defend oneself when faced with racism or to let it go. It is difficult enough to transition and learn the culture and values of the university and department. This experience can also be complicated by doctoral students' experience with intersecting

forms of oppression inherent in higher education (Gildersleeve, Croom, &Vasquez (2011). There is emerging evidence connecting social and academic challenges faced for some doctoral students of color to decreased successful socialization practices to and connection during doctoral study. Racial socialization in an organizational context refers to the socialization of graduate students to the realities of race and racism, which has been shown to provide a buffer against some forms of racism that, may be experienced in the academic context (Rowley, 2014, Truong & Museus, 2012, Summer).

Social and academic challenges

It is critical for all graduate students to be socially and academically integrated in to the community in which they aspire (Flynn, Harper, & Sanchez, 2011). Unfortunately, for students from traditionally marginalized racial groups, this transition or place can be seen as unwelcoming and isolating, reinforcing negative societal messages as they look to find place in the academic community. Gonzalez, Marin, Perez, Figueroa, and Navia (2001) found that although Chicano students had increased access to support as mentoring and increased numbers of Chicano peers, students still felt isolated at their institutions. Similarly, Gonzalez (2009), in a study of recently graduated Latina faculty reflecting on their doctoral experiences, found that participants reported facing isolation, alienation, lack of support, low expectations from faculty based on racial and ethnic discrimination, and discouragement from using more culturally appropriate epistemologies, theories, and frameworks as well as linguistic bias. These studies demonstrate that not all students feel welcome to campus where not many students look like them and it takes more than surface strategies to improve the socialization experience for doctoral students of color.

When students of color face academic and social challenges that directly relate to identity and ways of knowing, cognitive dissonance occurs. In a study of developing science identity in female undergraduate students, it was found that gender differences and perceived self-efficacy exists. Martin, Zubriggen, Syed, Goza, and Bearman (2011) surveyed undergraduate, graduate, and postdoctoral fellows of color in STEM attending the Society of the Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS) conference. They proposed that the effect of science support on commitment to science careers would be mediated by science self-efficacy and identity as a scientist. They found that high levels of support such as mentorship and research experiences for graduate students worked together to develop a science identity and reinforce commitment to the field. This shows that "engagement in research activities has a persistent and additive effect on student intentions over time" (Shultz, Hernandez, Woodcock, Estrada, Chance, Aguiliar, & Serpe, 2011, p.110). Outside of reinforcing self-efficacy and identity in developing a commitment to an identity as a graduate student and profession, mentoring was the other most salient factor for students of color in doctoral programs in the development of commitment to professions (Kim-Prieto, Copeland, Hopson, Simmons, & Leibowitz, 2013).

Even when students feel comfortable in a program, academic challenges can present themselves. In a study of black graduate students in Mathematics, Cooper (2004) found that students reported that work in graduate school required long hours and hard work and rigorous classes as undergrads did help, but some courses could have done a better job at preparing them for the rigor of graduate coursework. In addition, students reported differences related to studying, including group work, working alone, and a

combination of both. Although students felt comfortable in the program, some reports of a hostile and competitive climate exist. Awareness of students' potential and strong mentorship are a few of the recommendations for faculty working with graduate students of color (Cooper, 2004).

At times academic challenges occur when there is incongruence between student and faculty expectations. Ten faculty members and 18 graduate students were interviewed about their interest, conceptions, and experiences in mathematics at one institution (Herzig, 2002). Faculty felt students need talent to be very successful. None thought all the current students could succeed, but also said it was hard to predict success. Students, however, though hard work could result in success and talent played less of a role than determination, luck, and focus. Students with known preparation deficiencies were still required to take doctoral level work rather than address their weaknesses prior to enrolling in more advanced coursework (Herzig, 2002). Coursework and qualifying exams were recognized as weeding mechanisms and homework and other assessments were not always apart of routine feedback, which frustrated students. According to one professor, "They're in a hurry to kick people out of here" (p.187). Students described negative relationships and interactions with faculty, particularly early in the program, when they felt they needed the most guidance. Programs such as undergraduate research helped students prepare for academics and research goals at the graduate level. This suggests that much work still needs to be done to address social inequities experience by students of color in graduate education. New insights should expand this knowledge to the ways in the role of the department may work with other socialization agents.

Socialization and social identities

Social identities play a role in socializing experiences for doctoral students. Relating socialization to the experiences of students of color, who also have multiple and overlapping identities is important as unsuccessful socialization contributes to attrition (Gardner, 2008). In a study examining socialization as experienced by underrepresented students in chemistry and history (defined as women, racial underrepresentation, age, part-time status, and parental status), Gardner (2008) found that students discussed not fitting the mold of graduate school, negative interactions with others and feeling different which impacted their overall satisfaction with the degree program. Students of color repeatedly commented about their lack of integration and feelings of isolation. An African American woman, who went from industry and returned to receive her Ph.D. in chemistry, remarked on the challenge of navigating a difficult departmental climate and ended her interview with "I just hope I can make it out of here without too many scars" (Gardner, 2008, p.132). Balancing time and priorities is particularly relevant for students with children and families and normative socialization practices that may not fit the lifestyle of diverse students can cause them to believe that they do not fit the mold of graduate school (Gardner, 2008).

In a similar study, Gardner and Holley (2011) using a social capital framework studied how first generation graduate students negotiate and navigate education. In this work, for first-generation students, who are often also mostly females and students of color, family played a large role in their experience and acclimation as a graduate student. Students expressed familial understanding for aspiration for the baccalaureate but not the doctoral degree (see also McCallum, 2012). Students felt like they didn't belong in either

space, academia versus where you came from. Financial support was also critical and assistantships were not enough for many students who also took out loans, or held down more than one job to make ends meet. Students of color come to doctoral study with multiple and intersecting identities such as the ones described above and these identities mediate how students integrate with the social and academic environment around them and the extent to which socialization occurs. Context becomes increasingly important as what may work for some students may not work for all and "this predominance points to the issue that socialization to normative characteristics when the individual does not fit the typical mold of graduate education" (Gardner, 2008, p.132).

Doctoral Student Support Strategies

The abundance of research developed and presented on socialization experiences for doctoral students of color indicates that this is a priority deserving full attention. Identifying strategies for institutional diversity practice can provide unique ways to improve transition to doctoral study for students of color by challenging leaders to move beyond rhetoric to action by involving the entire community in the work of infusing equity by addressing barriers related to race/ethnicity (Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2005). There is a need to focus on student social and academic development, include purposeful socialization practices and the use of resources to enhance student learning. Furthermore, giving attention to cultural differences that students bring to the department and that foster a welcoming climate that engages all students of color in the service of socialization and the development of the department. Graduate populations tend to be small and a student of color may be one of a few or the only student of color in an academic program (Tapia & Johnson, 2009). While

socialization helps to understand the complex dynamics of the doctoral degree process, there are still gaps related to race that scholars have sought to address and "Examining how schools facilitate (or fail to facilitate) this transition can help identify the gaps or discrepancies in the socialization process" (Rapp and Golde, 2008, p.22). Evidence on strategies to improve the transition to and socialization in doctoral studies identify institutional support and social and academic development in the forms of purposeful socialization practices, purposeful mentoring, community and peer networks, and orientation and transition courses as viable solutions to address the challenge of transition to and through the first year for doctoral students of color.

Purposeful socialization practices

Rowley (2014) argues that it is important to involve students in racial socialization prior to entering graduate school. The history of racism and racialized interactions is a challenge for many students of color at Predominantly White Institutions (PWI's) and this frame takes into account the unique cultural and social background for different groups of students. The key is to understand the ongoing reality of race in American and that the social lives of students of color are different from White students, whether or not a student has experienced overt forms of racism (Rowley, 2014). He argues, "There is often cultural incongruence or cultural dissonance between students and the departments and universities they are studying in" (p.158).

According to Rowley's work purposeful socialization practices for students of color include: "(a) their unique organizational/institutional contexts, (b) the norms of how knowledge is socially constructed and disseminated within one particular field of study, and (c) the realities of race (as an idea) and racism (as a structural reality) within the

larger social, cultural, and historical contexts in which their institution is situated"(p.159). In socialization and organizational culture, students learn what they know about graduate education through the socialization process. Socialization and knowledge creation refers to the nature of the relationship between "knowledge, knowers, and knowers in training". Knowledge is socially created and everything that comes to be as knowledge is legitimated (Rowley, 2014). Managing the social and psychological benefits of a diverse socialization experience is possible when differences are acknowledged between socializing agents and diverse students (Rowley, 2014). Racial socialization in an organizational context refers to the socialization of graduate students to the realities of race and racism which has been shown to provide a buffer against some forms of racism that may be experienced in the academic context (Truong & Museus, 2012). Rowley's framework addresses issues for African American students, however, given the socio-historical issues related to race at PWI's this work can and should be extended to include all students of color.

Purposeful mentorship

Of those who don't succeed in doctoral study, among the many factors for those who left was the inability to find mentors and get support early on within the department (Herzig, 2002; Lovitts, 2001). Literature points the critical nature of faculty mentorship for successful socialization and matriculation through to graduation for doctoral students in general (Nettles & Millet, 2006) and students of color (Brown, Davis, & McClendon, 1999; Felder, 2010; Griffin, Perez, Holmes, & Mayo, 2010; Williams, 2013). Effective mentorship has been shown to improve sense of belonging in the department (Wood & Viernes Turner, 2015) influence persistence (Herzig, 2004), and

enhance connection to research and the profession (Davidson & Foster-Johnson, 2001), all critical outcomes of socialization. If a positive relationship develops, the students will be able to see themselves in a similar role (Wood & Viernes-Turner, 2015). Departments should partner with the educational equity office in the graduate college to offer seminars on best practices in mentoring students of color.

Purposeful mentoring, as opposed to traditional mentoring, is a term I am using to mean mentoring that is responsive to the needs of students of color and addresses many concerns articulated above related to the assimilation of students into the dominant culture, where they don't feel welcome, like their research ideas matter, and challenges related to issues to race, gender, sexuality, etc (Davidson & Foster- Johnson, 2001; Gonzalez, 2009). Participation in purposeful mentorship programs has the potential to produce valuable results for graduate students of color. Successful mentorship should integrate a student into the department, develop key networks, develop research competencies, and instead of focused on assimilation, should focus on authentic cultural pluralism, making diversity issues such as an awareness of culture, race, and ethnicity a priority (Davidson & Foster-Johnson, 2001).

Felder and Barker (2013) developed an Interest Convergence Advising Framework based on Bell's (1980) concept of interest convergence. Interest convergence explains race relations in terms of the legal scholarship and posits that rights for people of color only occur when the interests of both people of color and whites meet. Bell argued, " No matter how much harm blacks suffered as a result of historical and current discrimination, meaningful relief would not be obtained until policymakers perceived the relief black sought furthered interests or resolved issues of more primary concern" (Bell,

2003, p. 1624). Extending this theory, Felder and Barker (2013) re-conceptualize the relational, racial, and power dynamics involved in aspects of negotiation and building of racial awareness. It is presented as a component of the advising process, a key element of a successful socialization experience for doctoral students of color. It examines how faculty and students identify ideas essential to understanding common interest and is highly subjective to each student-faculty relationship. Too often students of color don't receive the necessary socialization to finish the degree. While this framework does not address the entire socialization process, it does address critical components in the process such as advising that go a long way to supporting students of color in graduate education, where students and faculty of color are severely underrepresented.

Community and peer networks

The need for community and networks to others can be substantial for students of color, who are often isolated on predominantly white campuses. (Carson, 2009: Museus and Jayakumar, 2012). Research suggests that collectivism, which is a critical aspect of communities of color, can serve as protection from isolation. Collectivism is ones connection to and responsibility for one's minority or ethnic group (Triandis, Bontempo, and Villareal, 1998). Collectivism has also be reflected in what is considered extended family, fictive-kin, or community structure with others who are not biological family but are thought of as such. Carson (2009) and Guiffrida, Kiyama, Waterman, and Museus (2012) discuss collectivism as reflected in institutional interventions that increase emotional and academic well-being. Carson's (2009) study examined collectivism and its influence on the academic success of African American students. This study utilized a collectivist framework. Sixteen undergraduate student participants were interviewed from

all years and disciplinary backgrounds. It was found that creating a network of faculty, staff, and peers who are from similar racial and ethic backgrounds was a critical factor in supporting and empowering African American students. In addition, networking with at least one faculty member of color was shown to increase students' self-concept.

Recommendations from this work suggest creating an infrastructure that provides opportunities for student to engage in collectivist practices that fosters academic confidence and survival (Carson, 2009). Scholars suggest that institutional outreach programs should acknowledge and validate the collectivist cultures students come with (Carson, 2009; Guiffrida, et.al, 2012). This can occur during a student first point of contact at the university, such as orientation and should include other students, faculty, and staff that represent similar collectivist communities and can speak to successful navigation of a transition. Faculty, staff, and students who transmit knowledge of navigation and transition to an environment are considered cultural agents. Cultural agents are those who transmit critical cultural knowledge of an institution and system (Dee and Daly, 2012). Communication is important, in particular for those who are coming from different cultures that those of the dominant university culture. When issues arise, cultural agents can assist students in transition understand particular issues that may arise and how to cope and access resources (Dee and Daly, 2012).

Segura-Herrera (2006), provides a poignant auto-ethnographic account of the disconnect between her own culture and expectations of graduate school and the isolating and individualistic culture she experienced as a Latina female. Described as uprootedness, she expresses feeling sadness and grief due to the physical, social, and cultural uprooting from family, and the difficulty of being between two different and

opposing cultures. However, she was very committed to completing the program and after almost leaving there were two distinct aspects that she reflects as helped her decide to stay. One was the unconditional support of family, advisor, mentors, and friends from the program and second, the feeling that networks she experienced and developed mirrored warm familial relationships. She found facing the difficulties and struggles of straddling multiple cultures were eased with the support of her academic family. Several recommendations are provided for re-creating a sense of family among doctoral students who like her come to very white spaces from collectivist cultures. This includes creativity in re-creating family through bringing foods from family to school, cooking with friends, asking for motivation and inspiration from others, and getting involved on and off campus. As the studies above suggests, peer networks have a strong influence in the retention of doctoral students of color.

Peer networks have been identified as a vital element for success in doctoral education. Furthermore they can offer a community of others with shared goals and mitigate isolation that can be experienced during doctoral study. In addition, they are cited as an important resource to acquire the necessary information needed to gain access and thrive. They provide access to relational networks that offer benefits. Pilbeam, Lloyd- Jones, and Denyer (2013) examined the value of peer networks for doctoral students in a management school. Utilizing social capital as a theoretical framework, 17 students were interviewed over the course of a semester. It was found that networks were held in high regard. Students believed that there were no drawbacks to peer networks with the exception of potential distraction. Primary benefits included academic engagement and problem solving, personal support and professional development, and

validation. In particular the student group that considered themselves a network started their doctorate together and many,over time, had still kept in contact even though the numbers within the network diminished by the last year of study (Pilbeam, Lloyd- Jones, and Denyer, 2013). This study demonstrates the value of peer support during the doctoral process. Peer networks provided the opportunity for students to feel validated, have structure, resolve challenges, and support for academic and personal development.

Even though research (Carson, 2009; Dee and Daly, 2012; Guiffrida, et.al, 2012; and Pilbeam, et.al, 2013) suggest that developing institutional strategies in the very beginning that support collectivist cultures and help build peer networks it doesn't take into account strategies to support students who may not feel as comfortable connecting with others. Not every student may seek out resources on campus or seek out staff and faculty who transmit cultural knowledge during the transition to doctoral study. Developing strategies to identify and support doctoral students, who in spite of campus efforts do not feel comfortable approaching faculty and staff is needed.

Orientation, transition courses, and other recommendations

Several initiatives have focused on improving the socialization experiences, academic, and social challenges for doctoral students in the transition. Programs that combine financing and offer structure and support are successful at producing graduates (Herzig, 2004). Research points to transition support such as orientation programs and transition courses as opportunities to facilitate positive acclimation to graduate study.

Often more pronounced during the undergraduate degree, orientation programs ease the anxiety of new students by providing an opportunity for students to learn about

resources and meet students in and outside the department. Rooted in socialization theory, orientation provides an entrance into campus culture as students are being socialized to the university and department (Poock, 2008). They tend to be offered during the fall and provide an opportunity for students to build social networks and deal with non-academic issues. While most often occurring at the department level, Poock (2008) asserts that African American students have a great preference for campus-wide orientation than White students as this provides them an opportunity to get to know other students of color outside the department, especially for those in STEM who are more likely to be one of few or the only students of color in a cohort or department.

Orientation programs have been shown to increase satisfaction and reduce attrition in graduate programs (Poock, 2008; Taub & Komives, 1998). Taub and Komives (1998) discuss the ways in which they put theory to practice in organizing and evaluating a comprehensive orientation program at the University of Maryland for the college student personnel graduate program that began when a student was admitted and ended as the first semester began. During the evaluation phase, which focused on students' perceptions of the importance and effectiveness of the comprehensive approach found that all respondents found the program to be extremely important (Taub & Komives, 1998). Of all components of the program, ranked highest was the early contact with students through the buddy system.

Transition courses are highlighted as a best practice that assists students in acclimating to graduate school (Allen, 2008). Transition courses help students build collegiality, understanding of the university and department, program expectations, experience effective mentoring, and provide structure to develop goals (Allen, 2008).

They help students know and process immediately what skills and knowledge is necessary to move from student to independent researcher. Lovitts (2001) in her research on students who persist and those who leave, among the complexities of reasons is the lack of community. She posits that students who are not provided the opportunity to engage and be integrated into the department are more likely to be dissatisfied with their experience.

Based on a in-depth study of 8 institutions who implement transition courses for graduate students, student who participate in transition courses learn how research translates into scholarship and what practices will aid in developing those skills (Allen, 2008). Allen (2008) found that related to content, courses should include; history of the field, characteristics of successful graduate students, working with mentors, developing a professional identity, department requirements for the degree, ethics, professional behavior, writing proposals for fellowships and grant applications, writing skills for the dissertation, thesis, publishing, presentation skills for classroom and conference talks, and balancing life. Although most take place at the department level over the semester, Allen (2008) acknowledges and recommends that it can also take place at the university level. This would provide an opportunity to faculty and advanced graduate students from different disciplines to be involved, which would ensure different viewpoints. Positive peer and faculty interaction and support influences overall satisfaction with the graduate school experience. Most salient for doctoral students of color are those transition and orientation courses at the institution level which provide school sponsored peer groups so that students can connect with others who come from a similar background (Gasman, Hirschfeld, & Vultaggio, 2008). Both orientation and transition courses work in tandem

to aid the socialization of students to norms and expectations during the transition to doctoral study.

Keeping in line with strategies offered above, marginalization and isolation for doctoral students of color can be mitigated by culturally relevant socialization practices facilitated at the institution and departmental level, and presence of a critical mass of faculty and peers of color to foster a sense of community (Simpson, 2008). Quality of interaction with faculty, peers, and graduate school environment matter in the acclimation process (Johnson, et.al, 2010). In identifying wise schooling strategies that reduce stereotype threat during the socialization of African American doctoral students, Taylor and Antony (2000) found that critical are optimistic teacher student relationships, setting high expectations, and affirmation of intellectual abilities. Equally as important are social support with peers that help students navigate and understand academic and social processes. Strong peer support from more advanced graduate students can help new students navigate and understand academic and social processes (related to expectations and navigating the landscape) and foster long-term relationships. Like-minded peers helped mitigate social and intellectual isolation resulting from stereotype threat (Taylor & Antony, 2000).

Finally, departments should connect to university partners, reinforcing diversity efforts as an institutional responsibility (Bauman, Bustillos, Bensimon, & Bartell, 2005). In addition, departments should work with graduate diversity administrators to help train faculty and raise awareness of departmental equity needs. Excellence is determined by collaborative partnerships with change agents that have a hand in the socialization process. Further research needs to be done to understand the ways in which

graduate diversity administrators work collaboratively in the service of equity and excellence in doctoral education.

Critique of the Literature

The above provided a brief literature review on the transition to doctoral study, socialization experiences for doctoral students of color during the transition and through the academic pipeline, and strategies suggested by researchers that can help alleviate challenges and support acclimation and socialization to the doctoral role. As they have shown, while the transition to doctoral study is critical, feelings of marginalization, isolation, and difficult racial climate can inhibit positive acclimation that is necessary to integrate to the university and disciplinary community. Cohort models, orientation, transition support initiatives, and intentional peer connections can go along to way to helping doctoral students of color feel supported and navigate the first year. Even with the grounding of the above works, there are concerns related the literature search including issues related to a paucity of work related to intersecting identities and how identities mediate socialization experiences for doctoral students, lack of literature on large scale institutional efforts to aid the socialization process for students of color, and little to no literature related to the summer support of doctoral students of color**.**

Marginalized identities Largely segmented based on Race/Ethnicity

Most research identified (Felder, 2010; Gasman, et.al, 2008; Gildersleeve, et.al, 2011; Gonzalez, 2009; Gonzalez, 2007; Gonzalez, 2001; Johnson, et.al, 2010; Rowley, 2014; Simpson, 2008; Solorzano, 1998; Taylor & Antony, 2000; Troung & Museus, 2012; Wagner, 2010) related to one specific race or ethnicity. Understanding the need to capture the experiences of students who sit at the margins of higher education, scholars

have problematized issues of race and climate in higher education, particularly for African American and Latino communities. Furthermore, these racialized experiences while salient and valuable exclude and ignore other identities that also mediate a student's transition experience at a PWI. When acknowledgements of multiple identities are mentioned it is in the context of study findings not an intentional point of analysis from the beginning.

Missing from much of the literature on transition experiences are how students with multiple identities navigate the doctoral experience and negotiate this environment. Gardner (2008), in her work on underrepresented students, included populations who we know exists; however do not talk a lot about. Included in this work were participants who identified as parents, part-time students, age, racial underrepresentation, and women. As one of the few identified works that address multiple forms of marginalized identities, still missing was the identification of multiple identities, and the role it played in the socialization experience. It is important to note that Ellis (2001), addresses race and gender, however, does not go beyond these to consider socio-economic status and sexual orientation/gender identity.

Paucity of Literature on Large-scale efforts

It is clear that research and work on efforts to support and encourage a smooth transition for all graduate students has increased in the literature. Furthermore, acknowledging the challenges experienced by students of color and proposed ways to address these challenges has become an important factor of the work that is done at universities. Even so, empirical work that focused on suggestions on how to support students in the transition developed these findings based on research on specific

departments (Ball, 2007; Gardner, 2008; Gardner & Holley, 2011; Taub & Komives, 1998). Through my literature search, nothing was found on large university efforts, particularly case studies that support the transition to doctoral study for students of color. More importantly to my work, only one article was identified that spoke to programs that occurred in the summer prior to the fall semester which suggests that the work has been so minimal that it wasn't found through traditional literature search methods or that it really doesn't exist at all, again with the exception of one article.

Conceptual Framework

The lens with which I will use to ground this work is socialization. Much of the literature and frameworks on socialization of doctoral students began from traditional sociological and cultural perspectives. Socialization literature describes the outcomes, stages, core elements, and dimensions related to the socialization process. A person can only become aware of the values, feelings, and behavior, symbols, and shared reality associated with the organization through socialization (Merton, 1972,). Grounded in organizational theories and how people are shaped in organizations, socialization refers to "the manner in which the experiences of people learning the ropes of a new organizational position, status, or role are structured for them by others in the organization" (Van Maanen, 1978, p.19). Similarly, Bragg (1976) describes socialization as a "learning process through which the individual acquires the knowledge, skills, the values, and attitudes, and the habits and modes of through of the society to which he belongs" (p.3). Van Maanen (1978) argues that people acquire necessary social knowledge and skills needed differently because the way people process information and learning strategies are different.

Feldman (1981) provides a comprehensive look at the multiple ways socialization occurs, integrating five distinct views: " (a) socialization as the development of work skills and abilities, (b) socialization as the acquisition of a set of appropriate role behaviors, (c) socialization as the adjustment to the work group and group norms, (d) socialization as the learning of organizational values, and (e) socialization as the preparation for future roles within the organization or in a career path" (p. 380). Proposed is a three-stage socialization process, which encompasses the learning that one obtains prior to entrance into the organization, gaining an understanding of the new role where a shift may occur in skills and values, and mastering the skills required of the new role with adjustments and negotiation of organizational demands. Commitment to the professional role is a general outcome of socialization practices even though continued transformation to a professional identity continues long after initial introduction occurs (Thorton & Nardi, 1975).

Critical in this work is that in the same manner that individuals are socialized to an organization, simultaneously the larger groups shifts due to the influence that both have on each other (Wanous, Resichers, & Malik, 1984). The PhD prepares students to know and to do. It is the highest research oriented degree that can be sought and obtained. Earning a PhD signifies that one is knowledgeable and prepared to make the transition from the role of student to the role of scholar (Walker, Golde, Jones, Bueschel, & Hutchings, 2008). Those who are successful at completion will take on leadership responsibilities and roles ascribed by their profession. As such, scholars considering previous work on socialization have offered frameworks to address socialization in graduate education.

Socialization in Graduate Education

Students experience socialization processes that reflect their institution, department, and field as a whole. Work in socialization needs to address both how knowledge and skills develop and the normative experiences of graduate school (Stein & Weidman, 1989). There is a continuum of experiences shared among all students and others that differ based on the background and characteristics of each student (Weidman, Twale, & Stein, 2001). Regardless, student must acquire new information and strategies that help them to maneuver new environments (Staton & Darling, 1989).

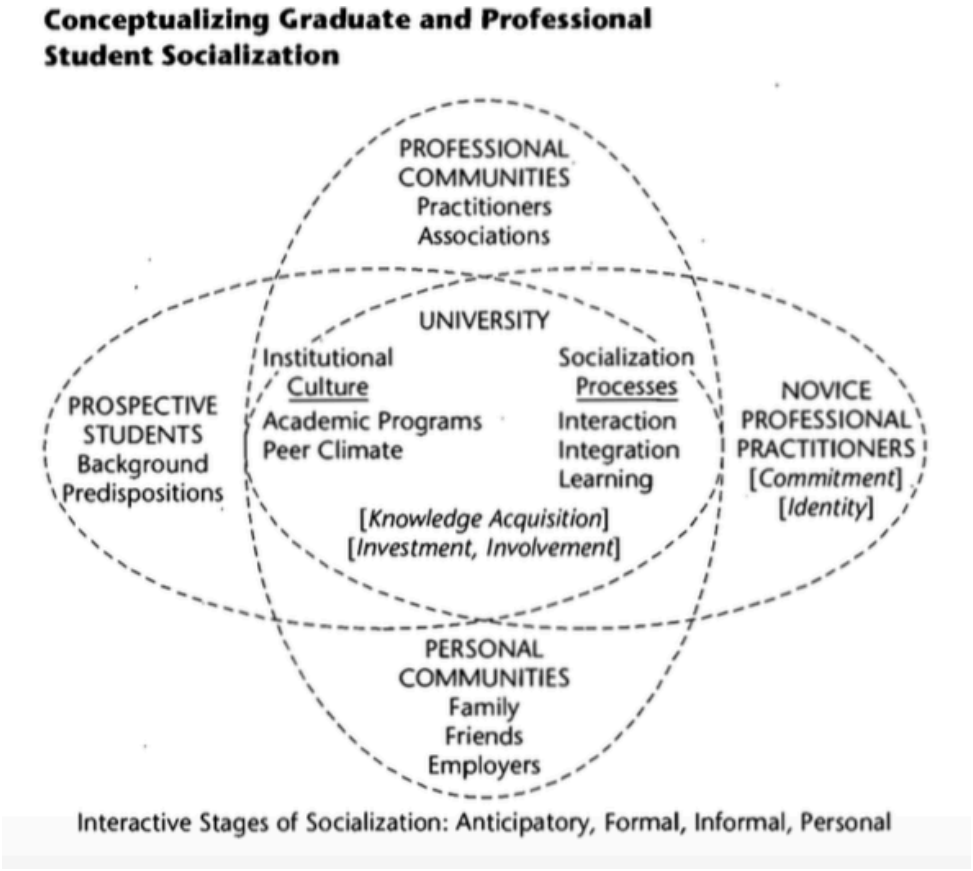
Socialization frameworks in graduate education can be described as linear and non-linear. Linear models focus on the process by which faculty admits students, socialize them according to the norms of the profession, and graduate them (Golde, 2010). Non-linear, interactive models focus on more extensive interaction by which faculty can support students' development and future role as a professional (Weidman, et.al, 2001). Adapted from Weidman's (1989) conceptual model of undergraduate socialization, Stein and Weidman (1989) developed a graduate socialization framework. It is similar to Bragg's (1976) work in that it uses a structural perspective on how departments socialize graduate students to meet the normative expectations of professional and social roles. However, Stein and Weidman (1989) argue that it is important to look at socialization from individual and institutional levels and differs from previous models by acknowledging the impact individuals have on the socialization process and related outcomes. In addition, this frame stresses the importance between background characteristics, the socialization process itself, and related outcomes. Role behavior can change over time due to tension between student needs and institutional requirements

(Stein & Weidman, 1989). This means that development just does not occur because of transmitted knowledge between two people, but through intentional and action creation of a new identity through personal understanding of a situation. The outcome of socialization is identification with and commitment to a new role (Weidman, et.al, 2001). The framework conceptualizes socialization as a series of interactive processes where a new graduate student:

1. Enters the institution with a set of values and beliefs about themselves and the institution, and practices associated with the role they aspire to.
2. Exposed to socializing influences and associated pressures from faculty, peers, society, non-educational groups, and the profession at large
3. Makes decisions on the personal relevance of external pressures in the attainment of personal and professional goals, and
4. "Assumes, changes, or maintains" norms, identity, and values they held when the journey first began (Stein & Weidman, 1989).

Most widely cited in the literature on graduate student socialization, Weidman, Twale and Stein (2001), assumes socialization occurs through an "interactive set of stages" (p.iv) vs. linear model presented in the works of Bragg (1976). It is a further modification of the Stein and Weidman (1989) model by incorporating the stages of socialization from Thornton and Nardi (1975). The conceptual model can be found in figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1. Weidman, Twale and Stein's (2001) Graduate and Professional student Socialization Framework (p.37).



The expanded framework incorporates differences, common threads, and expectations among students, academic and professional fields, and anticipated career outcomes (Weidman, et.al, 2001). The dynamic nature and complex process of socialization can be seen in addition to the elements that promote identity and commitment to the social and professional roles. In the center, are the core experiences in a graduate degree program related to the culture of the department, peer climate, and the core elements of socialization (interaction, integration, and learning). This represents areas the departments are responsible for. Faculty establishes academic norms within the larger program context. They admit new students and design the curriculum and social interactions between faculty and students in the department. During the course of study,

students are socialized into the field through interaction with peers and faculty acquiring new knowledge and becoming involved in the life of the program (Weidman, et.al, 2001).

Surrounding the university are other components of socialization that influence development and outcomes related to the professional and social role. Weidman et.al (2001) posit that they are arranged in circles to reinforce the relationship as non-linear and interactive. Each component, to a certain extent, influences departments and the students enrolled in them. The left side of the figure contains the background and predispositions of a student. This includes demographic characteristics such as race, gender, and socioeconomic status. Predispositions are related to the values, beliefs, learning styles, and career aspirations of students. The bottom refers to personal communities of a student that provide support or detract from study. Family, employers, and friends are not under the control of the department, however, have a big impact on students socialization experiences. The top center of the figure represents practitioners and associations that set standards for the field. Last but not least the right side display outcomes of socialization, which are commitment and identity to the field (Weidman et.al, 2001). Professional identity and commitment occur gradually and are affected by other elements of the framework. This framework is useful across different academic programs and shows that socialization is complex and ongoing during the course of the degree program. For students of color the salience of race is a critical factor that warrants further examination and evolution of existing frames.

In chapter two I have briefly reviewed relevant literature related to the transition to doctoral study, socialization experienced for doctoral students of color, and strategies scholars identified that departments and universities can utilize to mitigate the negative

experiences and promote positive socialization practices. Furthermore, I discussed socialization as the conceptual framework for this study. Chapter three will outline the methodology and methods that I used to carry out this work.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

As previously mentioned in chapter 1, the following research questions guide this study:

1. What are the historical and contextual factors that led to the development of the Summer Doctoral Transition Initiative (SDTI)?
    a. How have key practices and components evolved over the years?

2. How do faculty, graduate administrators, and SDTI staff view SDTI?
    a. What are the ways that faculty, graduate administrators, and SDTI staff describe the purpose and mission of SDTI?

3. What is the perceived influence of SDTI on the socialization to and through the first year of doctoral study?
    a. In what ways do the 2014 cohort describe their time as SDTI fellows?
    b. How do 2014 cohort members perceive the influence of SDTI on their acclimation to doctoral study?
    c. What is the perceived role of SDTI on the ability to navigate the first year of doctoral study?

This chapter will outline this project's method, including site selection, sampling procedures, and participants, as well as the process for data collection and data analysis. I conclude by reflecting on my role and position as a researcher.

Case Study Method

The interpretive case study approach that I have chosen for this dissertation is informed by my interest in the enactment of "local particulars" of a social phenomenon (Dyson & Genishi, 2005). I examine the enactment of the SDTI program, focusing on its perceived role in socializing new graduate students into academic life. I pay particular attention to the "factors that shape" and the processes through which students and others involved in the program "interpret or make meaningful" the program. Case study offers a means of capturing the meaning-making process in a situated context and representing the complexity of the human experience that undergirds case study methodology (Dyson

& Genishi, 2005). In addition, case study methodology makes a unique contribution to research and practice, complicating what it means to "prepare for" or "socialize students to" graduate education. Faculty, staff, administrators, and student peers all mediate what it means to be a new graduate student, helping students navigate unfamiliar cultural practices and meanings. New meaning is developed as a result of "language discourse, symbolic tools, and practices" (Dyson & Genishi, 2005) that make up SDTI (the social unit or "case").

Site Selection

The site selected for this dissertation is the Summer Doctoral Transition Initiative at the Midwest State University (MSU, pseudonym). Founded in the mid-1800's, MSU is a large, land grant, Carnegie Research I, Predominantly White Institution (PWI). Situated in a micro-urban college town, MSU boasts a rigorous research agenda, which attracts a variety of students from across the world. Framing MSU's commitment to strengthening the pipeline to graduate education is a sequence of efforts to recruit, enroll, and retain to degree completion undergraduates and new graduate students of color. MSU hosts an undergraduate research program for students of color, graduate student recruiting visits on other campuses, a pre-application visitation program for highly talented students, a post acceptance visitation program, SDTI, Post Program-Mentoring, and has a newly formed center focused on mentoring and supporting students of color in STEM from the first year through to graduation.

As with many large PWI's, Midwest State University has a history of challenges with student racial climate as evidenced by large scale initiatives in the 1960s to recruit large pools of African American students to campus in the Special Educational

Opportunity Program (SEOP) and more recently by reports of microaggressions on campus. Throughout its rich history, MSU has evolved with the times, addressing issues of recruitment and retention of undergraduate and graduate students. MSU was chosen as the site for this study since SDTI is one of a few programs of its kind in the country, and it serves as a key component of the recruitment and retention efforts of the graduate college and targeted at students of color. As such, SDTI represents a hallmark of graduate college strategies to address acclimation and socialization into the university community.

At MSU, the percentage of underrepresented graduate students has essentially remained stagnant over the 16 years under study, except for Latino/as who have gained the largest percentage over time. In the fall of 1999, students of color represented 11.5% of the graduate student population (7,874 total graduate students across campus). Disaggregated, Native Americans, African Americans, Latino/as, and Asian American/Pacific Islander students represented 0.177%, 3.9%, 2.3 %, and 5.3% of the graduate student population, respectively. It is important to note that Asian American students are not considered underrepresented in graduate education; however, they were lumped together with Pacific Islander students in 1999. This influenced the percentage of students of color underrepresented reported in 1999 versus 2014. In the fall of 2014, by comparison, students of color underrepresented in graduate education represented 9.34% of the graduate student population (10,037 total graduate students across campus). Disaggregated, Native American, African American, Latino/as, and Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and Multiracial students were approximately.17%, 3.4%, 4.3%, .79%, and 1.4% respectively. Latino/as represented the largest gain of about 200% growth in enrollment. Even though Latino/a enrollment increased dramatically with increased overall graduate

enrollment, enrollment figures for other students of color remained flat over the same time period.

Participants and Sampling

Purposeful sampling enables researchers to identify respondents who are drawn from the various categories of participants in the case and who are also best able to provide insight given the research questions (Jones, Torres, & Arminio, 2014). Participants included SDTI alumni, program staff, and faculty. Interviewees were purposefully sought based on the purpose of the study and research questions. It is within these criteria that I sought the maximum variation of faculty and students, in terms of discipline. Disciplines are defined as the macro categories that represent several departments that are closely linked and identified together; for example, STEM disciplines, humanities, and social sciences. Since participation in SDTI includes students from many disciplines across campus, purposeful recruitment along the same lines maximizes variation in perceived experiences.

SDTI alumni. A SDTI alum is defined as one who has participated in a summer cohort of SDTI. SDTI students come from disciplines across the university and were members of an ethnic group underrepresented in graduate education. The range of disciplines changed from year to year based on a number of factors, including how students heard about SDTI (which matters because it could influence who has access to program information); department support for entering students who are looking to apply; and admission by the graduate college.

Selection criteria for this study included that participants had been admitted to an MSU graduate program and that they had participated in MSU's SDTI program during

the summer of 2014. This included those who had matriculated through to the second year and those who had chosen to leave the university or had stopped out (i.e., left the university but have intentions to return). Bounding the selection criteria to 2014 provided an opportunity to examine participants' understanding of the role of varied factors in negotiating the transition to and through the first year of graduate school through socialization. SDTI mentoring was a year-long set of professional development seminars offered during the school year following the summer program designed to provide additional support to SDTI alums in the first year. The 2014 cohort was the first to participate in the current iteration of this formal program. While it had existed prior to 2014, significant additional programing was added that year. Prior to SDTI mentoring, the program was called "Grad Mentoring" and was focused on connecting new graduate students with faculty mentors from across the university.

My goal was also to include a balance of STEM and Social Science, Humanities, Education, and Business (SHEB) students. A list of alumni participants can be found below in Table 3.1. Each acronym is as follows: Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) and Historically Black College or University (HBCU). "Repeat School" is representative for those who attended MSU for a previous degree.

Table 3.1. Student Participant Demographics

Participant Demographics							
Students	**Race Ethnicity**	**Previous Degree**	**Previous Institution Type**	**Discipline**	**Degree Sought**	**Age**	**Previous Full-Time work Experience**
Donovan	African American	B.S	Large Research 1, PWI, Repeat School	SHEB	PhD	24	No
Adjua	African American	Masters	HBCU/Small Prestigious Private School	SHEB	PhD	39	Yes
Joshua	African American	Masters	Large Research 1, PWI	SHEB	PhD	49	Yes
Sherry	Multiracial	B.S	Large Research 1, PWI, Repeat School	STEM	PhD	24	No
Christina	Multiracial	B.S	Small Liberal Arts	STEM	PhD	23	No
Brian	Asian	Masters	Mid-sized institution in Mid-West	SHEB	PhD	31	Yes
Lamar	African American	B.S	Mid-Size Institution in Mid-West	SHEB	PhD	25	No
Oliver	African American	Masters	Large, Research 1, PWI, Mid-West	SHEB	PhD	26	Yes
Roxanne	African American	Masters	Mid-Sized Institution, South	SHEB	PhD	33	Yes
Monica	African American	B.S	Private Liberal Arts, South	SHEB	PhD	26	Yes
Mary	Multiracial	Masters	Private, Eastern	STEM	PhD	29	Yes
Roberto	Latino	Masters	Mid-Sized Institution in Mid-west, HSI in Mid-West	SHEB	PhD	30	Yes
Chris	African American	Masters	Mid-sized Institution in Mid-West	SHEB	PhD	46	Yes
Erica	African American	B.S	Community College in Mid-West, HBCU in South	SHEB	MS/PhD	39	
Angela	Latina	B.S	Liberal Arts in East	STEM	PhD	24	No
Faith	African American	Masters	Large Research 1,PWI, Repeat School	SHEB	PhD	30	Yes
Jerome	African American		Large Research 1, PWI in South	STEM	PhD	25	No

Graduate Diversity Administrators. Graduate Diversity Administrators included any participant who served in an administrative role while working with SDTI, either currently or in the past. The individuals I chose to recruit were not faculty members, as the Graduate College employs both faculty and non-faculty to serve in an administrative capacity; thus, it is important to differentiate between the two. Graduate Diversity administrators made SDTI admissions decisions, hired graduate student staff, and worked directly with faculty mentors and advisors for SDTI students.

Faculty. Faculty were an integral part of the SDTI experience, as they agreed to support students new to the University for the summer. Many served as permanent faculty advisors for SDTI students. Any faculty member who had worked with the SDTI program, and who was still working at MSU, was eligible to participate in the study.

Summer program staff. SDTI staff members included those involved in the 2014 cohort or those employed by SDTI in a supportive capacity at the time of the study. These included advanced doctoral students hired for the summer. Table 3.2 presents staff participants and their position. David and Malcolm have worked for SDTI both as students who were working towards the PhD and then again after degree-completion, which is designated by "Yes and No" in the far right column.

Table 3.2. Faculty and Staff Participant Demographics

	Race/Ethnicity	Years Working with Program	Previous Participant?	Discipline where applicable	PhD at the time of employment
Maria		13	No		No
David	Asian American	4	No	SHEB	Yes and No
Malcolm	African American	4	Yes	SHEB	Yes and No
Carlos			Yes	SHEB	No
Elsa	Latina	2	Yes	SHEB	No
Sounia	Latina	1	Yes	SHEB	Yes
Alberto	Latino		Yes	SHEB	No
Marisol	African American	1	No	SHEB	No
Faculty	**Race/Ethnicity**	**Years Advising SDTI Students**	**Discipline**		
Willie	African American	14	SHEB		
Derek	African American	18	SHEB		
Matthew	Caucasian	3	STEM		

Data Collection

In sociocultural socialization research, social practices refer to recurrent events or interactive activities undergirded with community and cultural values and beliefs. These events are the primary way socialization occurs (Miller & Goodnow, 1995). Everyday events become a part of group identity and contribute to a "sense of belonging and identity within a community" (Miller & Goodnow, 1995, p. 6). The context of everyday events unfolds in interaction, "informing who speaks, what gets said, and the sort of public meaning that gets established" (Dyson & Genishi, 2005, p. 8). As such, the focus of data collection centers on students understanding of the particular activities that occurred during the summer of 2014 and the subsequent first year. Data sources included interviews and document analysis.

Interviews. Interviews took place from mid-December 2015 to March 2016. I interviewed SDTI alumni, faculty, and administrators. I sent a recruitment email to SDTI administrators who then disseminated the email to the 2014 SDTI cohort. I contacted the

Associate Director to send out the recruitment email on my behalf, soliciting volunteers. After being contacted by students willing to volunteer, I scheduled interviews. I interviewed each student once, and the interviews lasted anywhere between 45 to 90 minutes. Interviews were conducted in quiet locations around campus, or over the phone for those not located on campus.

Interviewing the 2014 cohort provided an opportunity for me to hear from students that I did not interact with in my former role as SDTI coordinator. While my participation in SDTI gives me a particular lens (to be elaborated upon below in the "role of researcher" section), it was important for critical engagement to distance myself from the students that I directly worked with in the program. Students who participate in SDTI have self-identified as members of racial groups traditionally under-represented and under-served in graduate education. Of the 30 students who participated in SDTI in the summer of 2014, 27 were still enrolled as students during the time of data collection. One student that I interviewed was no longer enrolled, but still lived in the area and was willing to participate. I used the saturation method to determine the number of alumni to interview. Data saturation is the determination that enough has been collected through interview that further collection is no longer warranted (Fusch & Ness, 2015). In social research, several strategies have been suggested to improve the likelihood of data saturation: these include triangulation, using the same protocol for each participant, and using multiple data sources.

My first step was to contact the graduate diversity administrators and interview them. This included the program founder and the assistant director who oversaw SDTI at the time of the interview. The SDTI program is run out of the Educational Equity Office

at MSU and is one of many programs the office oversees throughout the year. Both the program founder and assistant director work as full-time staff in the office. Other SDTI staff are employed only in the summer months. Each interview with the program founder and assistant director lasted about an hour. The program founder had extensive experience working in programs that support the educational advancement of students of color at a variety of institutional types. The program office also provided additional documents for review. For the purposes of noting the findings and the participant chart, graduate diversity administrators were also considered staff members, but their unique role is differentiated in Table 3.2.

I contacted Faculty and SDTI staff concerning participation in this study through direct email. In total, seven staff members and three faculty members met the criteria and were interviewed. Faculty and staff were each interviewed once, with each interview lasting about 25 to 90 minutes. Interviews were conducted in quiet spaces on campus by phone, or in the faculty or staff members' office. I sent an initial email out to all faculty members who had participated in the SDTI program in the same year as the cohort under study. Through the first recruitment period in January, I emailed fourteen faculty members, securing interviews with three. After waiting for two weeks, follow-up emails were sent in addition to new emails to faculty who had worked with SDTI students who I hadn't emailed the first time. No additional interviews were garnered from the second recruitment period. After four weeks, there was further follow-up with the initial set of faculty, who had not responded, and with the second group. No additional interviews developed as a result of the email follow-up. After six weeks of faculty recruitment, and

three emails, I decided to cease faculty recruitment and moved forward with the interviews that were completed.

SDTI staff who were also SDTI alumni were only interviewed in relation to their role as a staff member. This was despite the fact that, at times, they were eager to relate their experiences as students in the program. A total of four people were interviewed who had worked as advanced graduate student staff in 2014. After initial data collection, I decided to interview other former program coordinators to provide additional history on the program. In total, I interviewed six former staff members. Coordinators are advanced graduate students who were responsible for carrying out daily duties of the program, including (after 2012) the hiring of additional advanced graduate students who served in instructional capacities such as teaching professional development or research writing. These new roles will be covered in Chapter 4.

Artifacts. Artifacts included the SDTI website, program communications, original proposals, video, brochures, surveys, and other documents provided by the Educational Equity office about the SDTI program.

Learning occurs through social interaction, and programmatic "policy is processual, dynamic, and in motion" and can be inferred from practices and beliefs that facilitate cultural production through social practices (McCarty, 2011, p.2). Policy is also considered a practice of power that operates at multiple, intersectional levels: face to face, local communities of practice, and larger global contexts. McCarty illustrates these multiple levels through an example from an American Indian community. Through social and educational practices, the community educators, a teacher, and researchers moved through the curricular process of reshaping language and language practices. In the

current study, reading through textual documents on the SDTI website and documents provided by the educational equity staff illuminated policy that was at play through the socialization process in the SDTI case. Documents such as the program manual highlight the process used to communicate expectations and to craft the experience. Furthermore, such documents also highlight the changing nature of the enacted policy over the years. In addition, documents were used to confirm other sources of data in assisting in the creating of the case study (Jones, Torres, & Arminio, 2014). Of the many advantages of utilizing artifacts,

> Visual data, documents, artifacts, and other unobtrusive measures provide both historical and contextual dimensions to your observations and interviews. They enrich what you see and hear by supporting, expanding, and challenging your portrayals and perceptions. (Jones, et al. as quoted by Glesne, 2011, p.143)

During interviews, I asked SDTI alumni about their perception of the documents, and to refute or confirm textual information in the document as one way of triangulating information.

Data Analysis

Analysis is the process by which data is broken down into parts for review and interpretation, gaining insight into the phenomenon (Jones et al., 2014). Data analysis of both interviews and artifacts occurred simultaneously, yet involved different strategies. For the interviews, I used thematic inductive analysis to study interview transcripts and accompanying field notes. After reading transcriptions and listening to audio recordings, I coded transcripts and fieldnotes line by line during thematic open coding. This process was used to brainstorm ideas, themes, and connections between or among participants

(Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011). During this open coding, thematic categories remained open, and were generated and refined as I moved line by line and developed initial codes for participants' perspectives on the socialization program (Jones, et al., 2014). Focused coding (sometimes referred to as "axial coding") allowed me to organize potential topics or themes and collapse open codes based on research questions and theoretical framework. Thematic data units were organized and compared and inter-relationships among them examined. After comparing the data from field notes and semi-structured interviews, recurrent themes became coding categories.

Artifacts were analyzed by focusing on patterns of repetition; discourse about the purpose of the SDTI and how it is managed day to day; and confirming or disconfirming relationships within the documents and other sources of information, such as the website. Since I examined different types of artifacts, each individual artifact could call for a shift in how the whole were analyzed. The website provided patterns of language use by the program and of content—that is, the institutional discourse communicated about the mission and purpose of the program. Other program source materials such as newsletters, grant applications, and syllabi were analyzed by focusing on the discourse but also on how these documents were used and the stories that surrounded their interpretation and use by participants (Jones, et al., 2014).

I connected artifacts to interviews by discussing their meaning with participants. A visual representation of how each research question connected to a source of evidence and how the data analysis strategy tied everything together can be found below in Table 3.3. Thematic and document analysis refers to how I analyzed and interpreted the findings of this study. Researchers suggest that in qualitative research, analysis, and

interpretation should be fluid and should reflect themes or ideas that develop and can then be interpreted (Jones, et al., 2014).

Table 3.3. Connection between research questions, data sources, and methods of analysis.

Research Questions	Sub Questions	Data Sources	Methods of Analysis
What are the historical and contextual factors that led to the development of the Summer Doctoral Transition Institute (SDTI)?	How have key practices and components evolved over the years?	Documents (Artifacts) Interviews	Thematic Analysis
How do faculty, graduate administrators, and SDTI staff view SDTI?	What are the ways in which faculty, graduate administrators, and SDTI staff describe the purpose and mission of SDTI?	Interviews Document Analysis	Thematic Analysis
What is the perceived influence of SDTI on the socialization to and through the first-year of doctoral study?	In what ways do the 2014 cohort describe their time as SDTI fellows?	Interviews Document Analysis	Thematic Analysis
	How do cohort members perceive the influence of SDTI on the acclimation to doctoral study?	Interviews	Thematic Analysis
	What is the perceived role of SDTI on the ability to navigate the first year of doctoral study?	Interviews	Thematic Analysis

Validity

My experience as a 2012 SDTI participant and 2015 Coordinator has the inherent potential to bias the study. My knowledge and demonstrated commitment to the program, however, also provides a perspective I would not otherwise have. The background, identity, and beliefs of each researcher mediates the design and interpretation of a

research study. With this knowledge in mind, I took steps to increase the trustworthiness of the semi-structured interview protocols and resulting data.

Prior to submitting to the Institutional Review Board, I held three pilot interviews. Each protocol was piloted with an individual who fit the characteristic of someone in the study, but who would not themselves serve as a potential study participant. My first pilot was with a program staff member that worked in 2015. I interviewed her using the program staff protocol, which lasted about 40 minutes, and I took detailed notes on which questions required clarification and if there were additional things I would have liked to ask but did not. After the interview, the interviewee and I debriefed regarding the structure of the questions for staff, including any suggestions on a more constructive way to address specific topics within each set of questions. I repeated this process with a program alumna from 2012 and a faculty member who had some knowledge of the program, but had not participated as an advisor.

Following data collection and transcription I utilized peer debriefing to support the validity of my findings. Peer debriefing involves the utilization of colleagues or "peers" to assist in developing a deeper understanding of the data, to support the researcher as themes are developed, to probe for bias, and to aid in the development of upcoming steps in the design (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). I used peer de-briefers through the Advanced Qualitative Research course and from writing group members. During this process, four times over the semester, I presented work, with peers providing feedback and asking questions to push me on my own critical thinking. They also offered suggestions on ways to move forward with themes and historical context. Readers are now seeing the direct influence of their immense feedback directly in this dissertation.

Role of Researcher

Reflecting on my work, my connection to SDTI at MSU began prior to the dissertation. I met the founder and first director on a cooperating institutional student recruiting trip when I was working full-time as Director of Multicultural Programs at a similar type of institution. After deciding to leave my full-time job in 2012 to pursue the doctorate, she encouraged me to apply to SDTI, understanding that my time away from the student academic environment was substantial and participation would allow me the opportunity to get my "student sea legs" again. While not a perfect experience, and despite the ease with which I can say things "could have been better," SDTI allowed me the opportunity to move in early, get a head start on figuring out my own research, and to meet phenomenal peers, some of whom I wrote with on a weekly basis to complete this at times overwhelming project called a dissertation.

The ease with which I gained access to program information, student participants, and surveys, denotes my insider status within the program. Even when I interviewed students, they readily acknowledged their willingness to help a fellow "alumna" work towards completion and that they would pass the word along to get others to participate. Each participant allowed me in their space and mind in a way that may not have been possible had I not also been a doctoral student of color. Nods of understanding, lots of "you know, right?" and ending with a general conversation about our shared experiences made this a rich experience and also displayed the value of disconfirming evidence for those who experienced SDTI differently from myself. I saw the program with fresh eyes, and in those moments when I may have left voices out, there were amazing faculty who reminded me that there are different stories to tell, and thus I should not lose them.

In some ways I feel like my career and educational pathways have groomed me for this moment. Over the years at MSU, I have worked with many initiatives sponsored by the Office of Educational Equity, most recently as coordinator of SDTI. Drawing from my previous full-time experience, I gave all of myself in the service of assisting new students and moving the program forward. Even so, challenges existed, which had the potential to threaten the future and potential of SDTI. To this end, I recognized that as a woman of color, first-generation Ph.D. student, and single parent that even with these overlapping and complex marginalized identities, to some students if you do not have the exact identity as them, it is not enough. The "woe is me" mentality becomes one in which if you do not share the exact multiple identities as others, then it's not enough, and suddenly " I don't understand." Even in this position of power, while focusing on my own trajectory, it challenged and furthered my understanding of acclimating to this very new and foreign environment and broadened my understanding of intersecting identities and the role these identities play in how students come to understand their place in higher education. Some students were learning what it meant to be a doctoral student while addressing life's additional challenges. Often, this may have more to do with the challenge of living in one's own skin than acclimating to campus or one's program. During the one's life there are multiple identities—such as mother, sister, or even a marginalized person—that one may have already navigated. As a student takes on a *new* identity, they then have to navigate both what it means for them and how might others perceive them.

While completing this work, the challenges I faced included respecting the voices of the students, administrators, and faculty I interviewed, as well as making very difficult

choices on what to discuss and what to let go so that I could protect information that might ultimately do more harm than good. My role is not as evaluator but observer and researcher, seeking to uncover and understand the phenomena of interest. Fine and Weiss (1996), even in their own work, are cautious about how to handle sensitive and what they consider to be "hot" information when the population is already demonized on a daily basis. I was cautious of the implications my work might have on the future of this program and on the students and administrators who had worked hard to build this scholarly community. In addition, I was cautious about my pride for this program, and this pride overshadowing the multiple truths of students whose stories reflected a different reality. Leaving space for those voices was critical to this work.

In an era of multiculturalism and a movement towards socioeconomic status as the new "affirmative action," I am reminded of Gloria Ladson-Billings' injunction to keep race at the center. Consistent with her argument (see Ladson- Billings (1996)), I too argue through my work that the goal is not to attempt to place one struggle over another, but to acknowledge that race has been muted within the new multicultural agenda. My goal is to speak to the heart of the program, acknowledging the complexity of space, climate, community, and multiple identities that influence students' interaction with the university and department environment: all without muting or marginalizing race. Too often popularized discourse ignores the historical and social reality of race on which this program and others like it developed at Predominantly White Institutions. Born out of the struggle on campus was the need to create financial, social, and academic opportunities, along with space for community to develop amongst doctoral students of color. I am cautious of the implications this work may have on the future of this program

and on the students and administrators who have worked hard to build this scholarly community.

CHAPTER 4:

FORMATION, DEVELOPMENT, AND EVOLUTION OF A PROGRAM

SDTI is not a new program, nor was it new to me when I decided to pursue this case as a topic of dissertation study. I recognize the impact that SDTI has had on my own experience as a new doctoral student transitioning from my professional field and from my identity as a full-time administrator. While this case study examines the experiences of SDTI students, faculty, and staff at a particular point in time, its mission remains at the forefront: to acclimate graduate students of color and to mitigate the challenges they experience at PWIs.

In this chapter, I tell a story of how the program began and provide context for Chapters Five and Six. Such a context is integral to understanding the organization of SDTI. As the literature states, *context* is concerned with the where, how, and under what circumstances the case came to be (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006). Furthermore, in qualitative research, context reveals that the environment in which the program occurs influences human behavior (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006). As a result, I was not as concerned with establishing a framework in this chapter as I was focused on how best to relay the words of those closest to the program, in order to ground what will follow in the remaining chapters.

To be successful, doctoral students must become dually socialized into their discipline and into their role as a new graduate student. Intersecting with socialization as a new graduate student is how race, gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, socio-economic background, and first-generation status mediate students' understanding and negotiation of these new values, expectations, language, and culture to move forward

in their work and new field. Since 1999, SDTI has worked to assist students of color in making the transition to life at a large PWI, moving beyond mere institutional rhetoric to developing a stepping-stone to matriculation and completion. In this chapter, I discuss the formation, development, and evolution of SDTI from its inception up to 2014, the year of the alumni cohort that participated in this study. There are two overarching topics of SDTI in this chapter. First, I connect the formation of the program and changes over time to the factors that influenced these changes; second, I provide an overview of the structure of the program and its key components for the 2014 cohort.

Higher Education and MSU as a Historically Exclusionary Space

Students of color have experienced a tumultuous history in higher education and at PWIs in particular. Prior to the 1940s, there was nearly complete segregation of African American students in higher education. The first African American to receive a bachelor's degree graduated from Bowdoin College in 1826 (Williamson, 2003). At that time, participation in higher education for African Americans in the north was extremely low and actively discouraged (Williamson, 2003). Some towns even closed institutions altogether, to prevent African American enrollment. Over the next 100 years, enrollment grew very slowly. In the segregated south, African American education developed through the founding and development of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Nonetheless, those interested in graduate and professional education faced roadblocks, as none of the HBCUs at the time conferred either graduate or professional degrees (Williamson, 2003).

In the 1930s, organizations such as the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) began to challenge racial segregation through judicial

means. Lawsuits such as Missouri ex. Rel. Gaines v. Canada and Sipuel v. Board of Regents were filed against segregated southern universities; as a result, the courts determined that Law Schools violated the 14th amendment by not providing "separate but equal" facilities (Williamson, 2003). In the case of doctoral education, McLaurin v. Oklahoma State (1950) determined that separate restrictions placed on African American students inhibited their ability to engage with classmates and enjoy experiences that would assist in learning their respective professions (Williamson, 2003). In the same year of the McLaurin decision, the Supreme Court found in Sweatt v. Painter that the education the University of Texas Law School provided based on the separate but equal law was, in fact, *not* equal in its provisions, ordering that Sweatt be granted admission (Williamson, 2003; Goldstone, 2012).

Even with these substantive changes in case law, many institutions continued their exclusionary practices, only reluctantly admitting African American students over time and under great protest. Prior to the 1960s, in the north, African American students faced isolation and social exclusion on campus; these low numbers led to a focus on individual survival, rather than on meaningful and sweeping change. In fact, Mid-West State University (MSU) was not exempt from this inequitable and racist reality (Williamson, 2003).

African American enrollment at MSU did not begin until twenty years after its founding in 1867. The first African American student stayed for only a year; the first African American male did not graduate until 1900, with the first African American female following close behind in 1906 (Williamson, 2003). Over the next 38 years, African American enrollment climbed to 148 students, representing less than 1% of the

student population at that time. Discriminatory housing practices forced students who did attend MSU to live in the local African American community, far from campus. For students, overt discriminatory experiences such as racialized grading policies, discriminatory treatment in the local community, and exclusion from white campus groups contributed to a hostile climate (Williamson, 2003). At MSU, the KKK student group was formed, reportedly, between 1906 and 1909, and 20 of the 21 existing fraternities appointed a representative to this group. The name was later changed to "Tu-Mas," reportedly a Native American term, and the organization remained active until the 1930s (Darder, 2009). Even so, minstrel blackface was common at MSU until the 1940s, and African Americans were required to enter the back of local establishments or eat in the kitchen until the early 1960s (Williamson, 2003; Darder, 2009).

Federal legislation influenced the increase of African Americans on campus and the movement toward specific demands made by students. Influencing this movement were the Civil Rights Act of 1964—which stipulated the withholding of federal money for non-compliance with anti-discriminatory practices—and the Higher Education Act of 1965, which provided funding for students to attend institutions of higher education (Williamson, 2003). As a result, campuses began to implement what were considered affirmative action programs, leading to increases in minority enrollment. Despite this growth, African American students at MSU continued to experience a sense of alienation and discrimination on campus. As a result, students led and participated in several movements calling for change (Williamson, 2003). The protests advocated for culturally affirming spaces, African American studies programs, and increased recruitment and retention initiatives.

The first summer program was developed by the College of Liberal Arts in 1965 for both African American and White students who had already gained admission to MSU (Williamson, 2003). The program focused on guidance, training, and filling deficiencies that we perceived to inhibit progress at the institution. In 1966, MSU added a supplemental education program, admitting African American and White students who the university considered disadvantaged. In 1967, this program was adjusted to admit only African American students, making it the first race-specific program on campus (Williamson, 2003).

The first recruitment program at MSU over which students held a considerable amount of influence was the institution-wide Special Educational Opportunities Program (SEOP) in 1968 (Williamson, 2003). SEOP was an ambitious recruiting effort that focused largely on African American students, but did include students from other backgrounds. Precursors to SEOP included efforts in various colleges such as the College of Education undergraduate exchange program with an HBCU; the College of Engineering's recruitment program; and the College of Law's "equal opportunity fellowship" (Williamson, 2003).

The first cohort of SEOP targeted the enrollment of at least 500 minority students, which made it one of the largest efforts by a PWI at the time. This was a direct outcome of national civil rights events and campus student advocacy. SEOP became a permanent fixture in 1969, with a broadened scope to include retention support (Williamson, 2003). Parallel to African American students' efforts were the concerns of Latin@ students who also desired change; their efforts to move active demands forward led to the addition of a campus cultural center geared toward Latin@ student support (Darder, 2009). Most

notably, these efforts were documented and communicated through the *La Carta* student newsletter (Darder, 2009).

While programs at MSU focused largely on the undergraduate population, graduate students simultaneously and energetically advocated for change. African American graduate students who were involved in the Black Student Association (BSA) took an active role in recruitment initiatives that led the administration to triple the number of African American graduate students from 107 in 1962 to 345 by 1972 (Williamson, 2003). African American graduate students were also actively involved in SEOP efforts, serving as tutors to undergraduates and supporting their academic and social efforts. By 1970, Black Law students separated from BSA and formed the Black Law Students Association (BLSA; Williamson, 2003). Soon afterward, the Black Graduate Committee of BSA also separated, becoming the Black Graduate Students Association (BGSA)—an organization that reinforced the need for affirming spaces that could promote collective action in graduate and professional education, and encourage growth in these populations across campus (Williamson, 2003). In 1972, MSU formally ended the use of graduate students in recruiting efforts, shifting the responsibility to full time professionals in the newly formed Graduate College Minority Student Affairs Office (Williamson, 2003).

At the same time, other marginalized groups, including Latin@s, Asian Americans, and Native American students, also advocated—and continue to advocate—for change in covert and overt discriminatory practices. Despite the increased number of students of color, intolerance remained (Darder, 2009). MSU's former mascot, a Native American caricature, emerged in 1946; for the next 60 years, the mascot played a

significant and pervasive role in MSU's campus and community culture, until its official retirement. Student protests beginning in 1987 sought to end official use of the mascot, arguing that it mocked and trivialized Native American culture while perpetuating negative stereotypes of the same (Darder, 2009). Even though the university has since denounced the mascot, it remains dear to many students and community members, much to the chagrin of students of color (Darder, 2009). Walking around campus, windows of businesses continue to display native mascot stickers; people walk down the street proudly wearing native mascot clothing; chants associated with the mascot are still sung at sporting events.

In the 1980s, Latin@ students advocated for additional student recruitment and to preserve murals painted on the walls of their cultural center (Darder, 2009). The lack of faculty and students of color spurred a 1992 protest that led to sit-ins and occupations of several academic and administrative buildings on campus (Darder, 2009). These efforts and others suggest that students did not feel like a legitimate part of the university community. This is the historical and contextual backdrop that existed when SDTI arrived on campus in 1999.

The Formation of a Program

Still only one a few programs of its kind nationwide, SDTI was developed out of the need to support new doctoral students of color. In early 2016, I sat down to formally interview Ms. Maria Green (pseudonym), who founded the SDTI program. This first official meeting was one of several conversations over the previous year and a half about the program, its beginnings, and the critical allies that had advocated for its existence and funding at MSU. It was her brainchild, cultivated for 14 years before Dr. David Brown

began to oversee the program. The impact and lasting legacy that she left behind is clear. Maria had worked for MSU since 1989, when she was asked to oversee an undergraduate research program. Over the course of her career in higher education, Maria had worked with countless programs, both at MSU and elsewhere, that sought to provide access to graduate education for students of color.

During my data collection process, there was not a single staff member or faculty participant that did not mention her name or ask if I had spoken with her. Many credited her influence on their own formation and support as doctoral students of color at MSU. For example, Alberto, who was the second advanced graduate student to serve as program coordinator in 2006 and 2007, reflected on the role Maria played in his success and how their interactions shaped his outlook as coordinator.

> There was always a constant with Maria: [she] really showed a lot of love and care for students and it goes back to this issue that we know we can do the academic work—we just want to be cared for sometimes. And Maria was really critical as a full-time staff member to show students that we were worth something and that we were breaking barriers. We were going to be one of the very few Black and Latinos to get a doctoral degree and a sense of responsibility that carries. I think faculty talk about it but, um, many faculty "talk the talk" but they don't "walk the walk." And Maria really reminded us of the sense of responsibility that we had towards our community and that is something that I really wanted to emulate.

The above quote reveals that Maria has had a long history of supporting and mentoring doctoral students of color—one that leaves a legacy of care and responsibility.

Even during my own application and acceptance process, Maria was the one who informed me about SDTI and encouraged me to apply. She had worked in higher education to broaden participation in post-secondary education long before SDTI began. Her previous experiences and passion for students at the margins coalesced in 1999, when she met with Derek, then Associate Dean of the Graduate College, about starting SDTI.

Overall, the 1980s and 1990s saw an increase in the development of programs and initiatives designed to support the matriculation, socialization, support, and graduation of doctoral students of color. In STEM fields, for example, organizations such as the Council of Graduate Schools' PhD Completion Project, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation's Graduate Education Initiative, the Ford Foundation, the Pew Charitable Trusts, and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation have collectively donated millions of dollars to doctoral-degree-granting institutions across the country in order to implement strategies and procedures designed to bolster the pipeline of doctoral students of color (Hill, Castillo, Ngu, & Pepion, 1999; Erhenberg, & Kuh, 2009). Often, these awards provided financial or programmatic support during the degree program. Maria conceived the idea for SDTI after learning about similar programs at two other large, very high research activity PWI's in both the mid-west and southeastern regions of the United States. Programs like SDTI are particularly unique in that such summer programs were, and still are, designed to acclimate graduate students of color to a new and often foreign environment not historically designed to support and teach them. Pushing the boundaries beyond traditional fellowship funding and undergraduate research, SDTI was the next clear step

in a line of initiatives that supported students of color's participation in advanced degrees at MSU. As Maria puts it, in her own words:

> [I]t was in 1999 that I thought, "you know, we should develop a program for graduate students"….we already had [the undergraduate research program], and our outreach was really largely what we were doing up here as well as identifying resources for minority students and again pointing them to opportunities. We had fellowships, we had a couple of fellowships up here for them, and, um, we worked with students in that regard. But we didn't have any other programming, um, like [the undergraduate research program] until SDTI was established.

Thinking back on the program's beginnings, having early models such as the summer initiatives in the Midwest and Southeast provided benchmarking and solid evidence that the outcomes were worth pursuing at MSU. The summer initiative at the Southwest University was very similar to SDTI in that it was offered over the summer for doctoral students underserved in higher education. The program was six weeks long and included a stipend of $3,500 to help with the transition to campus and credit hours for coursework in the department; it also required the completion of non-academic courses in statistics, research methods and writing, weekly professional development workshops, and additional programmatic activities. Lodging was only available for the first two weeks to assist students who were still searching for permanent housing. The initiative hired what they called "peer advisors" to work with the program over the summer (Board of Education Fellowship, 2016). Programs like these, again, spawned the idea and development of SDTI at MSU; the effects of this knowledge transmission can be seen today.

SDTI was a natural progression from the programming that the Graduate School at MSU was already engaged in. Broadening participation in graduate school through undergraduate research and recruiting diverse students were already a part of the portfolio of MSU initiatives. So, when Maria approached the graduate school, which included Derek, about funding, she had written a proposal that outlined goals, mission, objectives as well as the intended outcomes for the program (see Appendix D for the initial proposal). SDTI received the full support of the institution, first through a budget increase for the undergraduate research program, which saw funds funneled to SDTI, and very soon thereafter with its own permanent budget line. The summer of 1999 saw its first cohort of eight students, which included students who had participated in undergraduate research at MSU and had decided to return for graduate work; thus, a support pipeline was created. SDTI was intended to give students an opportunity to come to campus early, to gain a sense of the university community, and to acclimate to graduate life. Dr. Derek Spencer, former associate dean during the founding of SDTI and current department head, recalled the mission and importance of developing SDTI at MSU.

> But in the beginning, we really wanted a program where, let's say, you are in the field of history and you are going to conduct research, requiring knowledge of Spanish. You can actually use that summer to immerse yourself in the language that you might need; or, if you were going to do quantitative analysis and there were, you know, various forms of statistical literacy that you didn't have, you could spend the summer taking courses in that area. Um, if you wanted to do history, or whatever you wanted to do, and you needed to fill a requirement or

you needed a leg up, so to speak, then you could use SDTI to begin that so that you could hit ground running in the fall.

From its inception, SDTI was intended to serve as an opportunity for new graduate students to gain skills that they might need to be successful in their academic journey. As a faculty member, Derek saw this as integral to the SDTI experience. In fact, from very early on, it was considered by many to be a bridge program. However, contrary to the tenets of transitional academic readiness, Derek also believed that the students who entered SDTI were already scholars who, having accepted admission into excellent programs, were prepared for the work ahead. Nonetheless, providing an opportunity to begin in the summer would facilitate the development of additional tools for success. As he put it:

> It wasn't so much as it was needed in the sense of…it's not like a compensatory program. We saw it as another level of excellence where we would simply be able to offer to the graduate students something that would actually enable them to excel in their programs. So, in some ways, if you say, "Well was it really needed?" For excellence, yes! But it's not as though they couldn't be successful in graduate school anyway, because they have a long track record of being successful in graduate school in its place and highly successful with that; but, it did occur to us that if we could add this dimension we actually could produce more outstanding students.

Dr. Willie Hoffman, a faculty member that has worked with student participants for fourteen years, also echoed similar thoughts about the quality of students.

> I do think one of the things that I would encourage would be for the Grad College to work more diligently at making sure faculty understood what [SDTI] is, what it's intended to do, and to have a better understanding of the quality of students who are coming in; because, sometimes faculty may think of [the SDTI program] in deficit terms, from affirmative action kinds of efforts, you following what I'm saying?

David, Associate Director of Equity Programs, had the responsibility of overseeing all summer programs and supervising the SDTI coordinator. He also discussed the importance of understanding that MSU attracted high quality students that were capable of graduate level work.

> I think the common misconception is students from these populations need more help. Or, I guess, what would be traditionally called a deficit model. That is not the model that we operate under. We see it really more as an incentive for us to try to recruit these students who, again, are very highly capable and competitive, and would otherwise go elsewhere.

Maria also spoke about the importance of understanding that there was a difference between preparation based on skills and abilities and gaining cultural knowledge about graduate school, and learning the clear expectations that would guide students' time in their respective programs, which was why SDTI was developed.

> You know…that okay, this is how things work, this has nothing to do with your skills and abilities. It's just a matter of understanding how these things work and then what to expect from the department and the faculty members. So, I think that it's good to know that there's somewhere that a student can go.

Participation in SDTI, in the opinion of faculty and staff, served to recruit students and offer support early that would promote success within the degree program and increase the numbers of students who would ultimately complete their respective programs. During the first years, the program was set up much like an orientation, in which students had a seminar once a week that ranged in topic, thereby providing structure to the program. Among the topics were campus and graduate college resources, tips for surviving as a graduate student of color, as well as professional development topics.

Students also had an opportunity to work with their faculty advisor to get a jump-start on their research, for which they received course credit. From the beginning, Maria thought it would be important for students not only to earn credit for what they were accomplishing but also to provide students access to much needed campus resources, such as health services, the bus system, and library access, all of which required that fees be covered through registration. This was something that the office had also done for the undergraduate summer program and found it to be particularly useful. Maria explained that even if a student's faculty advisor was not on campus in the summer and a student worked with someone else in the department, there was still an opportunity for a student to pursue research with a department designee over the summer. This provided the student with an early connection that was helpful, especially before the fall semester. As Maria described it:

> One might say, well you know first year for the school...first semester you'll figure that out, but it's not that easy to figure. This is a big campus, and, um, there's a lot going on, and so students...I think that's the one constant, um, and I

> also think that for students who are from under-represented populations, no matter what level, undergraduate, graduate there has got to be a place at a predominantly white institution where they can come and feel reaffirmed.

SDTI was ultimately a partnership between the institution at large and the academic department that focused on wraparound services during the summer transition. It served as both a recruitment and a retention tool. During my interview with David (Associate Director), he discussed why SDTI served in this capacity, working to attract the brightest students to MSU and the ways in which the development of SDTI moved that mission forward.

> [W]e see this program as being something that is a recruiting tool as well. Um, it's for the benefit to really recruit these extremely highly competitive students to our campus, 'cause at the end of the day, everybody wants these students. You know, everybody sees the value of diversity. Everybody sees the value that these students bring to the table. Quite frankly, programs like this help us to be competitive in the larger arena, because if we can't get these students to come here, they will go elsewhere, and they do go elsewhere. So we see this as another sort of, um, another sort of method of recruiting these students to come here. I mean it's really an excellent benefit, I think, coming for the summer before. It gives students a chance to get acclimated to campus before sort of jumping right in in the fall.

In addition to weekly seminars and research, students have always lived in privately owned, on-campus housing (in same building as the undergraduate research program), received a meal plan, a summer stipend to offset the cost of attending the

program (most students would have been working over the summer if they were not in the program), and travel costs to and from the institution. SDTI participants also interacted with advanced students and faculty from across the university through networking events, and spent the summer getting to know the micro-urban area that surrounds the campus. Students are accepted from departments across the university, and just as the programs have changed over time, so has SDTI.

Evolution of SDTI over Time

While the overall goal of SDTI has always been about helping students acclimate to graduate school, program components have shifted over time. These changes have included: how students come to learn about the program; cohort size; living arrangements and stipend; SDTI end of program deliverables; and staff structure, including the role of advanced graduate students.

Application to the program. In the beginning, students learned about the program primarily from the department and through notification from Maria during graduate school recruitment trips. In addition to founding the program, Maria also worked in the Graduate College as an administrator responsible for recruitment and retention efforts for graduate students of color. While recruiting for MSU in general, she would also talk with students about participating in SDTI once they accepted an offer of admission. Students were required to fill out the program application, which included an essay. The essay asked applicants to address the following foci: future research goals, anticipated benefits of participation, how identity influenced academic trajectory, and any academic accolades (Program Application). Furthermore, they were required to receive a letter

from the department that stated that students would receive research support and direction over the summer. Over the years, the number of participating departments, program alumni participants, and programmatic opportunities have increased. Students more recently learned about SDTI in several ways: through pre- and post-acceptance visitation programs; via a recommendation from the department; through former participation in undergraduate research at MSU; by word of mouth from former participants; and, through the website. The pre- and post-acceptance visitation programs are currently the primary way that students learn about the program and are encouraged to apply. David recounts how students generally have found out about SDTI today.

> Yeah, so students that have heard about the program are typically notified in one of several ways. Um, one, we have a spring campus visit program that many students attend who have been admitted to their graduate program. So at that campus visit event, we have an introduction to the program for new grad students of color; we talk about the benefits of the program; we give them an introduction to sort of the nuts and bolts of how the program works. So we encourage them to apply that way. We also reach out to directors of graduate study and department contacts in all of our departments across campus and encourage them to encourage any students who would qualify for our program. Some individuals hear by word of mouth. The former students tell their friends about it as well. We also advertise on our graduate college web page, so students also find us that way too.

In the 2014 cohort, for example, of the seventeen student participants in this study, four heard about SDTI through alum of the program, one as an undergraduate research

student at MSU, two from the website, five during the graduate college visitation program, and six from faculty members in their home department at MSU. Undergirding the changes over the years are feedback received from students about the summer and what they feel helped as well as what can be improved in addition to staff members, who, as advanced graduate students themselves, often think of things they wish they would have known coming in. This implies that there is ongoing evaluation in some form of the program, driven from both the ground up and the top down.

Over the years, it was also common for faculty and deans to make suggestions, based on perceived student needs, such as incorporating increased writing instruction over the summer. The section below on what influenced program evolution will go into greater detail, thus demonstrating that socialization is two-way, and that students both in the program and those who now work for the program offer something back in supporting students of color.

Cohort size and type. There were eight students in the first cohort. Over time, the numbers of students ranged from eight students in 1999 to a high of thirty-nine in 2013 (SDTI Program Student Demographics, 2016). Each year, the number of students fluctuated depending on factors such as budget, the number of applications, and graduate student of color acceptances. Cohort type also changed from year to year, related to what disciplines students were in, age, gender, and race/ethnicity. Again, these were influenced by factors outside of SDTI. Table 4.1 provides the number of students who participated over time.

Table 4.1. SDTI participants over the years

Year	Number of students	Year	Number of students
1999	8	2007	20
2000	16	2008	30
2001	18	2009	30
2002	24	2010	29
2003	25	2011	30
2004	29	2012	37
2005	20	2013	39
2006	26	2014	30

Weekly seminars. Part of how SDTI sought to achieve its perceived outcomes was through weekly seminars. The number of seminars per week and the time of day they were offered varied over the years. Very early on, there was one seminar per week that would be focused on a particular topic designed to help students understand graduate culture as well as student presentations. These included conducting job talks, giving research presentations, and networking. Other events during the week would include lunch socials with faculty. Over time, seminar components and time of day shifted due to expressed need from students, faculty, or administration. For example, as evidenced by post-program surveys that were taken immediately following the program (within a few weeks) each year, student concerns ranged from the number of seminars each week to the

perceived relevance of the seminar. Historically, the number of seminars ranged from one to five per week.

Stipend and living. Over the years, a stipend was provided to SDTI participants. While the amount of the stipend has changed over time, it was important to program administrators that students receive money over the summer, since they had to forego other sources of funding or income during participation. The stipend amount over time was not available from the program during the time of this work; however, the stipend in 2014 was $3,500. Housing was provided in a private residence hall and it included a meal plan for the summer. However, not every student lived on campus: some students came with partners and families, others had extenuating circumstances making off-campus living a better option in the summer. For students who did not live on campus, the program provided an additional stipend to offset the cost of housing, which was $2,000 in 2014.

Independent study (research). SDTI would not have been the program that it was without the assistance of the faculty advisor who worked with students over the summer, helping participants to learn more about the department and field, and assisting them in thinking about their future research direction. Each student who participated over the summer worked in cooperation with their faculty advisor to determine the goals of the summer, and what the deliverables should be. In STEM fields, students tended to rotate through labs or focus on a specific lab project. In the Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences disciplines, students either worked one-on-one with a faculty advisor or, depending on the department, several students worked with the same faculty member. The nature of the deliverables was completely left up to the student and faculty member,

and the student was assigned a grade at the end of the summer. This work was considered external to whatever deliverables SDTI had decided to require for the summer. The critical role of the faculty advisor in the of student experience will be addressed in Chapter 5. To foreshadow those findings, clearly the fact that the program began in the summer, when most faculty are not paid and pursue non-teaching goals, posed challenges.

SDTI covered the cost of tuition for the summer. Registering for the summer allowed students to not only receive credit for summer research, but also provided students with access to campus resources that are only provided to registered students. This included access to borrowing books, technology services, health services, and exercise spaces. It was important to the program that participants had access to everything as students that they would in the fall semester. Maria expounds upon the reason why this becomes so critical for students:

> Because we want them registered primarily, uh, not only for them to receive academic credit during the summer, but to make sure that they are able to receive all of the benefits of being a student on this campus, for instance medical, access to the library. You can't do that if you're just kind of hanging around.

Program deliverables. In addition to the independent study research that occurred, in many years students were also required to work on an "end of the summer deliverable." This came in the form of a small-scale proposal, to help students think about the direction of their research and learn parts of the proposal process. In other years, students were given the choice between a small fellowship proposal or conference proposal. Again, the programmatic goal was to instruct students on the proposal process and to finish the summer with something that could be worked on during their time at

MSU. Most unique, in 2013, students were required to work in interdisciplinary groups of four to conduct group research projects over the summer, and to present their work at the closing research symposium. In 2014, there was no end of summer deliverable required. The only work required came out of the independent study or specific seminar, if an instructor required it. David reflected on why program administrators and staff chose to remove the deliverable and the impending outcome:

> So, one of the things that we actually tried was a change from the previous year. So, the 2013 cohort, we tried something extremely ambitious which had never been done in the history of the program, which was to push students to produce not only a summer research project with their departments and their advisors, but we…forced is a strong word but I'll use it anyway. We forced them to join interdisciplinary groups, which we assigned, and they had to pursue an interdisciplinary project of their choice, which they decided amongst themselves over the summer too. So, we got a lot of pushback about that, good and bad, and so we relaxed that a little bit in 2014. We encouraged interdisciplinary [research and collaboration], but we did not require it. It had positive and negative effects, I think. One of the positive effects was that students were not quite as stressed out. That would happen in the summer. One of the negative effects, I think, was the students in 2014 somewhat ironically were ready for some of that interdisciplinary work and were willing to do more of the work, but without sort of the accountability of those assigning it, it didn't get done.

David provides another example of the two-way process of socialization within the program. In conversations over time, even though the program implemented forming

research groups, it wasn't just a programmatic decision to remove that component. It was based on feedback from students regarding the feasibility of that particular component. Given the goals of the program, interdisciplinary work mattered because it encouraged students to get to know each other and to think critically about how ideas from various disciplines connect together, a key component of socialization into the academy.

SDTI mentoring during the first year. In 2013, SDTI piloted a new series of programming that included more targeted professional development during the first academic year. Prior to that particular year, the program matched students with a faculty mentor that came from a different discipline than the student, in addition to hosting a few social events during the year. Beginning in 2013 the program no longer directly facilitated the matching of students and faculty; however, the program did provide suggestions to students on how they could begin the conversation and find a faculty mentor. This decision was made based on student feedback from previous years, yet another example of how students have influenced the evolution of the program. In 2014, the Equity Office decided to limit the attendance of students to the yearlong mentoring workshops to only those who were recent SDTI alums and renamed the program from "Grad Mentoring" to "SDTI Mentoring" to focus on students who had just completed the summer component. At the end of each school year, the office that oversaw SDTI organized a program to congratulate all SDTI alumni that were graduating, in addition to asking students to complete surveys immediately following the summer program, six months post-program, and one-year post program, to track academic progress and to see if perceptions of the program had changed over time. The SDTI Mentoring agenda for 2014-2015 can be found in Appendix E. Below, David discusses what workshops are

scheduled for SDTI alumni during the school year. He emphasizes the role that that the Educational Equity Office has in tracking students and supporting them throughout the school year.

> So, after the summer was over, we encourage our students to continue participating in a Transition Program over the course of that next academic year. So, for the next academic year, our Transition Program Fellows continue on as Mentoring Fellows. We schedule workshops, and/or talks for them once a month. We try to meet with them at least once a month for the next academic year, just to track their progress. Um, to see how they're doing. Um, a year after the program, we also send out a survey to complement the exit interview surveys we do immediately after the program…just to try to track progress. So, we see other long lasting effects of the program. So, we started doing those surveys in 2013. So, um, they're also invited to come to lots of events that the Graduate College hosts in terms of workshops, again the congratulatory ceremony in the spring. So we try to keep in contact with them as much as we can without overburdening them over the course of that academic year. After the first year, that pretty much is it, um, formally.

Staff structure and the role of advanced graduate students. SDTI purposefully hired advanced graduate students to work with new students. Staff that were advanced graduate students had a particular view—one that could be lost or forgotten the further one gets from graduation. Prior to 2014, there was only one graduate student employed for SDTI: the coordinator. It was in this year that the program decided to add additional graduate students to work with writing, professional development, and "culture of

graduate school" workshops. Malcolm, coordinator in 2014, discussed one of the most recent changes, which included the structure of staff.

> Another big change is, uh, [SDTI] used to only have one staff person. Used to have a coordinator only. And then, uh, over time like they've introduced sort of new positions, like writing consultants, or research team leaders, and things of that nature. So those are all fairly new. We didn't have that kind of structure (when Malcolm was in the program).

The hiring of advanced graduate students was intended to provide students a unique professional development opportunity that provided the opportunity to learn more about advising new students, develop curriculum, and gain administrative experiences—all important tools as graduate students proceeded toward graduation and into faculty or administrative roles. For student staff, who were selected through an application and interview process with educational equity staff members and the SDTI coordinator, the position offered a perceived increase of self-efficacy and the opportunity to serve as a role model for new students. Indeed, staff were often former participants themselves. In asking about the significance of hiring advanced graduate students and what that means for the mission of the overall program, David believed that hiring advanced graduate students, and especially those who were former participants, provided an opportunity to hear perspectives from those students currently "in the trenches" and therefore able to speak to current needs:

> Um, but I know that my own personal philosophy of why we hire a graduate student to do that...uh, and we in fact prioritize students who have gone through the process of being in the program and are now further along in their graduate

school endeavors. Um, my personal feeling about that is...well, two-fold. One, I think that a graduate student has a pretty unique perspective on what the needs are of graduate students. So, somebody who has come through the program; somebody that has matriculated into a program here on campus, and has gone through that...is in their 2nd, 3rd, 4th, or what have you, year has a pretty unique perspective on what the specific needs are. And every year since I've finished [the doctorate], I'm a year further away from being a graduate student, so I really value that graduate student perspective. Um, and secondly, I think it really gives an opportunity for students to be involved in the process of this transition.

Carlos, former staff member and former coordinator, acknowledged reciprocal learning that develops with working with new doctoral students as an advanced student, as each group influenced the other. Furthermore, he appreciated that advanced students that participated in SDTI as new students had an opportunity to "pay it forward" and have a direct impact in grooming new students.

I think it is the greatest thing in the world. One, to say that you are a doctoral student, and you are training other doctoral students to be doctoral students—not many people can be in that type of position. Um, because even as a graduate student, if you are a teaching assistant, 9 times out of 10 you're a TA for an undergraduate class, not a graduate class. So, the fact that we can be doctoral students, training other doctoral students, is an amazing thing. Um, and I learned a lot about myself throughout the process. Um, it wasn't just me instructing [SDTI] students, it was also me helping myself. You know, I learned a lot when I would be having conversations about the research process. In theory,

> low and behold, I would end up helping myself. Like something would connect, you know in our conversations. Um, it's one thing I always appreciate about [SDTI] is that it's giving opportunity for former [SDTI] students, or other students that are passionate about grooming students like themselves. I think that's very important, and again that goes with the theme of community. You know, sort of keep it in the family.

Hiring advanced graduate students was and continued to be a priority for SDTI. As expressed by the Associate Director, hiring advanced students helped the program advance its mission by including the unique perspectives of those who had participated in the program and had passed significant milestones in their program. It provided an opportunity for advanced students to pass on their accumulated knowledge and expertise, and provided new students with role models and a vision of what could be and what was possible.

Since 1999, SDTI has taken many shapes and forms. Everything from the cohort size and who decides to participate, weekly seminars, program deliverables, first-year engagement, and staff structure all influence how each cohort experiences the program. The program is different each year because the program changed and people change. The changes that occurred over the years were influenced by a variety of factors: most notably, faculty feedback, the responses of former participants, and ideas put forward by administration, all with the perceived goal of responsiveness to student concerns. The following section will cover what themes emerged as having influenced these changes.

Influencing the evolution of SDTI[1]

Based on the perceived and articulated needs of the students, the evolution of the program over time was influenced by faculty, former participants, administration, and research in graduate education. Faculty have played a large role in how components of the program changed from what academic seminars were offered over the years to the time of the day those seminars were offered. Particularly in STEM fields, for example, faculty were very vocal about the times that SDTI programmatic components were offered, as their students tended to be in lab all day. This section is broken down into three subthemes as I argue that external stakeholders such as faculty and upper level graduate college administrators have influenced change over the years. SDTI has sought to be responsive to student feedback each year and that is not without its challenges. Furthermore, as staff changed each year, each has brought their own decisions and experiences, which have influenced program shift year to year.

External constituents. Over the years, external constituents such as faculty and upper level administrators provided input concerning SDTI. From the beginning, faculty members were interested in working with students for the summer. However, based on faculty responses, staff perceived that part of their role was to dispel the myth that SDTI was for students academically unprepared for graduate school. Maria, the program founder, reflecting on the early development of the program, emphasized what she heard and perceived as faculty members' perceptions in this regard. Since student participation

[1] SDTI at MSU is not isolated, but rather is impacted by what happens nationally in higher education. This study does not place the evolution of SDTI in the context of how similar programs evolved; however, this should be considered in future work.

was dependent upon faculty support, she felt that it was important to communicate the true purpose of the program:

> I think that the departments welcomed the program…[and] the vast majority of them, once it was understood what we wanted to do, in fact were excited…"Oh ok, we can bring these students here early." Um, what needed to always be made clear is that these students are not selected. In fact, the faculty members have to endorse their participation, but they are not remedial students. Now that had to be made clear. Well…quite honestly I think that there were…not the deans or anything, but there were some people in the grad college who may have asked that. And, um….no…no way it was remedial.

Students that did not include the letter of support from faculty were not admitted to SDTI for the summer. This is an example of how important cooperation from faculty was to the program mission. Even still, Maria found it important to make sure the message of SDTI was communicated, which was important for how faculty viewed the program and for how they interacted with students. Early on, what people saw was a program that occurred over the summer consistent with a traditional undergraduate academic bridge program; however, over time that perception changed.

Navigating feedback and concerns from faculty was seen as a priority over the years. For STEM faculty, concerns included the student requirement to attend SDTI seminars during the day, leading to the missing of lab meetings or lab time. As a result, seminars and events were shifted to evenings and weekends. SDTI staff, each year, negotiated a variety of concerns like this from faculty. At the same time, they made decisions that were not always accepted or understood by faculty, but were perceived as

important. Juggling expectations and concerns from external partners was a continual process that evolved as faculty advisors and upper levels administrators changed. David, thinking about the makeup of the program and its partners, emphasized the continuous negotiation and compromise that occurred between the program and its external partners, leading to changes in the program. Even though the program and its external partners might not have always agreed on student needs, David was clear on what he saw as the role of the program during the student's transition to doctoral study:

> So, our program is really kind of an interesting hybrid mix between being driven by the graduate college and our agenda. Understanding also that these students belong to their home departments already. They're actually admitted into those departments. So, it's really a negotiation process between what we expect for those students, and what those departments expect for those students. So, um, sometimes that's not always parallel, but most of the times it is. So that's a discussion and conversation that goes on. So, we see our role as trying to prepare the students as best we can in terms of giving them and equipping them with skills necessary to be successful in graduate school. But, we try to align those as closely as possible with what the department sees as being important and valuable.

As the above quote demonstrates, even when departments and the program did not see eye to eye on programmatic changes, staff perceived themselves as compromising and working alongside what faculty viewed as important for the transition. For example, staff received feedback from faculty that they would like to see more preparation in the area of graduate level writing. As a result of this feedback, as well as student and staff

feedback, in 2014, the program decided to incorporate a research writing seminar. In addition, they offered two seminars, divided between STEM and Humanities Arts, and Sciences disciplines.

Even though the role of staff was described as equipping students, which can be perceived as remedial, equipping students can also be seen as a sort of racialized, coded language in addition to academics. However, coded language and academics is layered and not always parallel. Based on the mission of the program, students are equipped with strategies to cope with being a student of color on a predominantly white campus. Furthermore, the program perceives that they equip students to understand what it means to change institution types, to get to know other students of color, and to learn things about graduate school most students do not usually learn until far into a graduate program. These are intangibles that most often are not learned until after undergraduate school.

How departments view the program could be more remedial, but the program does not view students in this manner, as evidenced by earlier statements about the kinds of students that attend the program. In addition, students are not admitted to school on condition of participation in SDTI; rather, it is up to the student who is admitted to MSU to apply, and to the nominating department who has agreed to provide research support to the student. David, again reflecting on how feedback from external constituents influenced changes in the programmatic components from year to year, discussed the ways in which faculty concerns had a direct impact on how SDTI was structured at the time of this study:

> So, we also have weekly research writing group meetings where students are formed into even smaller cohorts, so they have a chance not only to bond with

each other as students, but receive some feedback on their writing. That's sort of a newer aspect we've incorporated in the last couple of years, to try to give more direct feedback on student writing. That was in response to some faculty concerns that students weren't being prepared to write as well as they needed to be, and that's true across all disciplines…across all departments. So, you know we've been trying to incorporate that as much as we can as far as a benefit, an additional benefit to the program.

Incorporating changes such as including a research writing seminar was seen by David as an added benefit to the program, one that enhanced student learning and acclimation to the expectations of graduate study. As important as staff saw faculty in carrying out the program, the relationship did not exist without its challenges. Furthermore, staff was very honest about the ways changes in upper level administration shifted expectations for the program and the staff who worked with it.

Challenges working with external constituents. The narrative of the ways in which external constituents work with staff in the program and influence change was not as neat as the program might prefer it to be. Those who supervised the lead administrator for summer programs in the Graduate School made key decisions on funding and on the continuation of the program based on expected outcomes and demonstrated success in those outcomes. In particular, during times of tight fiscal resources, these concerns and questions became more vocal and influenced the ways the program changed, and often determined how program staff demonstrated that intended outcomes had been achieved. Carlos, who worked for SDTI in many capacities over the years, including coordinator and seminar instructor, thought about the challenges of juggling external expectations

from upper level administrators who had their own ideas of changes that should occur as well as expectations for programmatic outcomes:

> Probably the biggest challenge is appeasing the people above our direct office. So that's sort of like the Dean of the Graduate College, people that directly fund [SDTI], which are outside, plus our offices on campus. Because if certain things aren't demonstrated, then the demands/expectations can change. That's really what happened in 2012 when I had [taken] another position, the policy sort of changed due to people above our direct office had different, had a different mindset for how [SDTI] should be. Um, which I don't think is a bad thing. I think that you have to change the program, for the program to grow, but that's definitely a challenge, is that you have to be appease a lot of people. Because if you don't appease them, then that's not a good thing.

The above quote demonstrates that while juggling expectations and demonstrating that outcomes were met could be challenging—navigating faculty concerns and the daily particulars of the program—Carlos didn't see these challenges or subsequent changes as necessarily a bad thing. Carlos also saw shifts in personnel in upper level offices as a catalyst for change, even as it presented challenges as different administrators maintained different expectations of what SDTI should be and do. In addition to addressing these expectations at the top level, faculty who were a part of the program for many years often were not familiar with changes that had occurred, despite their continued participation. David also addressed the challenges that came from working with faculty advisors who were unaware of how the program had changed over the years, particularly from those faculty who had long been involved with the program. He saw the onus of responsibility

on SDTI to make sure that communication was clear on the changes that had occurred over time. As he explained:

> Yes, so I would say by-and-large, our experience in working with faculty are on the whole positive. I would say that if there are any issues that arise, it's typically because our program will now be entering into its 17th year of existence and some faculty have been with us from the beginning. Over the years, as the program has morphed and changed to meet the changing needs of students, there can be some friction that results from expectation of faculty thinking that the program is a certain way. Quite honestly, the fault probably lies with us on the administrative side not communicating clearly enough to faculty how the program has been changing, how the program has been evolving. So, very often the faculty that work with our program, are deeply entrenched into their department culture and see certain things as being important and valuable for the enculturation of their graduate students. Very often that aligns with the things that we also see, but there are times where those things do not align.

Even though they expressed frustrations with the challenge of incongruent expectations—for example, expectations based on previous structure of the program—it was clear that staff members Carlos and David still valued the input of external partners such as upper level administrators and faculty in shaping and supporting SDTI. Communicating the ways in which the program evolved to meet the needs of the students who participate was seen as valuable and helpful for alleviating challenges moving forward. As the following excerpt illustrates, Malcolm also believed that challenges

existed in communicating programmatic changes to faculty that had been involved for many years:

> Um, and oftentimes that was because unlike [the undergraduate research program], the faculty for [SDTI] usually returned every summer. It was the same group. So, if you were a faculty mentor in 2000 or 1999, or whatever, uh, in your mind that's how the program still exists. So, it was hard to sort of work through those changes. But, anyway...we would always do a faculty orientation. This was before the students would arrive.

Carlos, David, and Malcolm all worked closely on the daily aspects of the program. All three served in the role of coordinator at one point in time, even if their roles changed over the years. This means that their experiences working with faculty were very salient.

Undergirding perceived challenges with faculty were time of day and amount of SDTI events that were offered. Staff didn't speak of challenges as it related to the backgrounds of students as much as of the time of day students were required to participate in seminars and other SDTI events. Similar among all staff who discussed challenges with external constituents was that there was a lack of understanding on the part of faculty on why required events would be helpful for new students coming in. In addition, SDTI staff members believed that the faculty who had participated in the program over the years were much less likely to attend the yearly pre-summer orientation. This made it more difficult to communicate changes over time and to explain the impetus behind the changes. Over the years, staff had to address the needs of new students while balancing the expectations of upper level administration as well as what faculty believed

students should be engaged in over the summer. These expectations influenced and continue to influence the evolution of SDTI.

As the students changed, so did the program. At the end of each semester, students who attended SDTI had the opportunity to provide feedback on the summer during program "exit interviews." How exit interviews were conducted changed each year, based on the decision of the coordinator. However, the purpose remained the same. In addition to the exit interviews, students were also sent a link to a survey immediately following the program, six months, and then a year post-program. Survey responses were anonymous and results were displayed in aggregate without identifying information. Student feedback was considered in planning the following year's program. Socialization is not a one-way process and program staff were very clear about the role student input had in the evolution of the program over the years. Maria, thinking about everyone that influenced changes over the years, specifically highlighted the most important source of feedback each summer:

> Oh, the team leaders, and the students in the program. You know, as I said, they gave very good feedback on what their interests and needs were. Honestly, I've had very good deans up here who just thought, "You know, best do this, you know..." and the only question was the cost. But if it's going to benefit the student, and of course reporting to the deans and them asking questions. Um, for the most part during [SDTI]…I'm tryna think when was a dean up here, we had a couple of deans. But they were very supportive of the program and, um, again you know, there would be some questions maybe that they may have had just so that they

had more clarity. But, it was really students…and their feedback, and faculty members.

Malcolm also reinforced Maria's sentiments that students were one of the biggest contributors in influencing the evolution of the program over the years. Some of the programs most significant recent changes came as a direct result of exit interviews and student concerns. Once staff decided what changes should and would be incorporated in the following year, then no new large changes were included until the next year. In Malcolm's words:

> So, usually it's based off of the needs from…the needs that were expressed in evaluations from the previous [SDTI] cohort. So, each summer you sort of…we do exit interviews with the cohorts, and then we take their best suggestions and we marinate on it for about a year, uh…as a staff, and then we start to build a new program and see what really worked well, what didn't work, what we should scrap, what we can enhance. But, most of those needs are based off the previous cohort. Um, and as the summer sort of goes along with that new cohort, we don't usually make a lot of programmatic adjustments because it's already sort of pre-paid for everything, but we do try to encourage students to come to the office hours that we would set up at satellite locations.

Since much of the feedback and changes occurred because of the most recent program, staff would find themselves incorporating changes that weren't appreciated by the next cohort. It was described to me by several staff members that the program was always "planning for the previous cohort." As students changed, so did the program, and the feelings and opinions of one group might not be the same as the next.

Students also provided feedback during the summer through mid-semester check-ins and smaller low-level items that required immediate attention. As David thought back on the ways that students had influenced the evolution of SDTI, he especially thought about the challenge of including changes or removing components based on one year's feedback that the next cohort might not prefer or even openly disapprove of. This also included considering students' personal statements from their applications. He explained:

> One of the ways that we try to identify those concerns is (and again this has sort of had varying levels of success), is try to ask the students from the previous year who have come through the program, what they found to be the most useful and the least useful aspects of the program. We've tried to adjust those, year by year. Now, of course, that has varying degrees of success, simply because, again, the cohorts are so diverse. That very often what was needed by the previous cohort ends up being not needed by the next year's cohort. So, that's sort of an issue that perhaps is somewhat insolvable, somewhat unavoidable. But we try to, based on sort of the weight of our tradition/our history, see what students typically need but then also be attuned to what our students who have just come through immediately need. We also try to reach out to the students beforehand to ask them what they need.

Being attuned to the needs of the students from year to year and incorporating those changes is important for the program, but does come without challenges. In addition to the varying of degrees of success incorporating those changes, it also means that the program finds it difficult to track particular outcomes from year to year. The

program does not stay the same in every aspect long enough to really see what works from year to year. Sounia, agreeing with David, also saw varying degrees of success incorporating different student feedback from year to year. Success was determined based on the following year's exit interviews and survey instruments. Furthermore, she also believed that consistently changing the program and being highly responsive to student concerns and feedback placed a strain on staff from year to year. In her words,

> Um, I do think that it has a lot of challenges, not because the program isn't potentially good, but because every time a group of students come in there's always something that is like "this isn't done too great" or "the students have some feedback." It's great to do an analysis and to try and, like, support all the students, but every time we change it, then like the next year there's a new thing that needs to be changed.

Responsiveness to student concerns and feedback was very important to the staff in SDTI. Over the years, students provided feedback that shaped the way SDTI looked at the time of this study. Feedback from students varied between workshop ideas to organization of the program itself. Over the course of the summer, there were a variety of ways students communicated feedback. Informally, students provided feedback directly to staff members about the nature of an event. Formally, summer feedback was solicited and collected. From what can be inferred from interviews, no staff members specifically talked about receiving feedback from students that was specifically related to being a student of color. However, during interviews with students (which can be found in Chapter Six) students did raise concerns related to challenges as a student of color.

Not without its challenges, this consistent shifting was perceived differently by each cohort, which made it difficult to keep the program stable from year to year; this could be a strain for staff who were running the program. Staff also influenced the evolution of SDTI over the years. Staff members experienced with the program over the years and their personal experience as advanced graduate students all added to how the program was shaped from year to year.

Staff decisions. SDTI staff were advanced graduate students, some of whom worked with the program for several consecutive years. Others had been involved in other aspects of graduate programs or their particular department over the years. These experiences in and out of the program all worked in tandem to shape SDTI from year to year. Each person's individual experience added to how the program particulars were carried out and what changes were suggested. Sounia, who was heavily involved in professional development for organizations, brought her experience to SDTI. This allowed her to incorporate the things she learned in order to teach seminar topics such as preparing a curriculum vitae or thinking about expectations around grammar. She explained:

> So, the writing professors, and [Malcolm] and [David], um, and asked like, "Here's some things I've seen over the time that I've been here. Here's also like the common threats [identified concerns] in the national organizations that I do pro dev [professional development] for. Um, one other one is all the time there's like a CV, so, um, being very critical about how you're saying things, action words, you know, proper grammar. Um, so it wasn't…we didn't do an analysis prior to be like, "Students, what would you like to learn?" It was more like, uh,

here's what we've seen all the time, and they're coming in so let's, you know, let's get them the opportunity to get, get those things together.

Sounia felt it was important for students to either gain or further develop skills, such as developing a curriculum vitae (CV) early, and her involvements in professional development organizations allowed her to be a particular asset in this regard. The 2014 cohort was the first to have a dedicated instructor for professional development. Carlos worked with SDTI on and off, in different capacities, from 2008 to the time of this study. He expounded upon how his experience and working with many students over time shaped the decisions he made about what and how he taught each year in acclimating students to doctoral level work:

> I had one thing and, again, this is with every summer, you quickly learn that students are not at the level that they should be, being graduate students [not remedial, but styles of graduate writing]. That's more so with academic writing. One of the biggest things that I observed, again this is 2008-2014, was students didn't even understand how to do a basic literature review. So when you say, "Write a literature review." "Well how do I do that? What does it look like?" So, you have to adjust sort of how you work with the students because, you know when you're the instructor of course you're coming in with a lot more knowledge and foresight. I had to adjust, we all had to adjust actually…to sort of bring it down and sort of recap what this process is. How to do a literature review, what is a research question? You can spend a whole seminar just talking about the research question… So all of these things were observations that I made, that

students needed the most help with. But that's the beauty of [SDTI] is that, that's the perfect place to do that.

Carlos perceived SDTI as a program where students could fill in gaps in knowledge while preparing for graduate school. Exposure to academic research may differ among students in any given SDTI cohort. Many students are coming directly to a doctoral program from undergraduate institutions, where the writing expectations may have been different. What is unknown is if the student or students Carlos is referencing (and he worked for SDTI for many years) were in research programs or any other program were there was exposure to research methods such as literature reviews or citation expectations. As noted in previous chapters, SDTI students are accepted into graduate programs based on academic merit and not contingent upon participation in the program. Therefore, SDTI offered seminars that staff decided would be useful that may or may not be covered for new doctoral students or seminars that students provided feedback that would be good to begin thinking about certain things before formal coursework. For example, in 2014, the program decided, based on student feedback, that there would be a research writing for social science students and a separate research writing for STEM seminar (since students are in disciplines from across the university). By providing seminars, the program is guiding students in the academic socialization of research expectations. Patterns of student knowledge over the years had provided Carlos a lens with which to prepare his own lessons and make decisions about the programmatic direction of the program and seminars.

David reflected on the evolution of programmatic components that were decided mostly by staff as to how the focus should shift, given both staff and student ideas of

what should be included in particular deliverables and projects. When he first began working with the program in 2012, staff completely developed all seminars workshops, and projects. However, David stressed that over time the program had moved towards more of a co-constructed model where students also had freedom to explore projects that were different from just the transitional research proposal, which had been a staple deliverable of SDTI until 2013. In his words:

> So when I first came on board in 2012, and this is going to sound like a question, but it isn't really meant to be, that there was sort of a top-down model of, "Students here's what you need, and here's the way that you need it, and here are the things that we want you to do." Really it's a way to buy in from the beginning and do it, in a way that's really unquestioned. So [we made decisions about] the kinds of workshops that we had students attend, the kind of presentations we had them do. At that the time the staff was really designed around executing the largest plan of what sort of we had put together administratively. Since that time I think we've striven to be as flexible as possible in terms of giving students more agency over the kinds of projects they were doing, rather than sort of a prescriptive approach. We've been, at least since I've been here, shifting away from, um, professionalizing too early, I guess, if that's the right way to say it, and more towards taking the exploratory approach….

Staff arrived to the program with a variety of experiences that shaped the way they sought to help students and evolve the program. Sounia, Carlos, and David provided examples of different experiences making decisions about what was best in the acclimation to graduate study. Over time, as new staff were hired, different decisions

were made about what was best and how the program should move forward. External constituents, such as faculty and upper level administrators, students, and staff themselves, all influenced the ways that the program evolved over the years. Many changes that occurred over time were a result of faculty and administrative influence. As students became familiar with the academic seminars, they also provided suggestions, therefore increasing their influence on academic matters. Seminars that were developed because of staff decision primarily were focused heaviest on professional development and the culture of graduate school. Importantly, staff did not discuss these changes in the context of SDTI being a program for students of color. However, staff members' perceptions of how the program focuses on students of color are detailed in Chapter Five.

This section examined constituencies that influenced the evolution of SDTI over the years and how particular decisions on these changes were made. Addressed above were examples of the influence that each group has had on the program and how it was carried out.

Components of SDTI 2014

Just as in previous years, the 2014 cohort experienced a program all its own. During the summer of 2014, 30 students participated. This year, just as in others before it, the summer program was modified slightly from previous years. It is important to understand how the program was set-up and executed, so that student and staff perceptions can be understood in the remaining chapters. SDTI ran from June 4th-August 1, 2014 for a total of 9 weeks. In the following sections, I will discuss the main components: the orientation, weekly seminars, and living and learning in the Midwest. Prior to arriving, students received an electronic copy of the program manual as well as a checklist for what to pack

and bring. The program manual is, besides the website, the first piece of material that communicates to students the mission, goals, and objectives of the program as perceived by the program staff. One of the first sections of the manual is an introduction to the program. As written in the introduction, students can expect to finish the program changed, gaining information and skills that should provide cultural knowledge to engage in research conversations, understand departmental culture, and learn the values and expectations of graduate education as a whole. Below is the introduction to the 2014 SDTI manual.

About the (Program)

> The transition from undergraduate to graduate education can be challenging! Adjustments in living, learning, and socializing will have to be made as students move from one level of educational training to another, one type of institution to another, or one geographical location to another. As students embark upon this next phase of their career development, it is particularly important that they are provided the time needed to settle and become comfortable with the culture of graduate school and this very new way of living. The purpose of the (program) at the (institution) is to provide incoming graduate students from U.S. populations underrepresented in graduate programs on our campus with a nine-week orientation to graduate study. The program provides participants with an early introduction to graduate study at (institution) and an opportunity to work with a summer research advisor or a faculty mentor in their department. An orientation to the department and the university through (the program) will assist participants in becoming socialized into the departmental culture, as well as afford them an advanced opportunity to become

quickly prepared for the rigors of their graduate program and living in the (micro-urban) area. During the nine-week summer session, each participant will be allowed to enroll in an independent study course directed by their advisor and fulfill a rotation (for students in the sciences and engineering). Students will participate in a series of seminars on research writing, professional development, and graduate school culture in order to become more acquainted and comfortable with the expectations of being a graduate scholar and academic professional. This summer (the program) runs from June 4th – August 1st, 2014.

The program manual included an introduction by the SDTI coordinator and Associate Director who oversaw all summer programs in 2014. The SDTI Coordinator was an advanced graduate student or recent graduate who oversaw the daily operations of the program. This included the selection and management of staff, the planning of events, curriculum development, and interacting with faculty advisors on student concerns. The manual also included descriptions of each seminar, student expectations, contracts for independent study, award criteria (e.g., "outstanding scholar"), and resources for writing, getting around campus, and on-campus resources. The purpose of the manual was for students to have a guide that delineated all of the components of the program, and to have a tangible item to return to often over the summer. This was just one way that the program, through written language, communicated to students that their goal was to help them adjust to graduate life by participating in activities that foster socialization into the role of student and into their respective field at large.

Orientation. After move-in, the first event students participated in was the program orientation. The program orientation laid an important foundation for the

remainder of the program. Led by the Coordinator, the orientation included page-by-page detail of program components, expectations, and participant responsibilities. Each seminar instructor introduced him or herself and explained how their particular seminar was organized. In 2014, I attended the orientation and one of the moments that sticks out to me was when Carlos, the instructor for the Culture of Graduate School, began to introduce himself. With a voice that filled the room, he stretched out his arms, similar to the famous statue that adorns the center of campus said, "Welcome," and proceeded to start his introduction. Carlos then talked about how he at one time sat where the new students were now sitting and he understood the journey each student now sought to undertake. This display of openness and hospitality was evident, providing evidence that staff understood what it meant to be in this new space, and that feeling included and understood was important. Orientation also included representatives of services and support offices from across the university who spent time in 15-minute intervals, explaining each office mission, handing out written materials, and fielding questions from students. During this time, students received textbooks and resource materials associated with each course. Orientation concluded with lunch. Full orientation schedule can be found as Figure 4.2.

Figure 4.1. SDTI 2014 orientation agenda

Orientation
Wednesday, 4 June 2014
Library

9:15 am	Welcome and Introduction of Staff: Coordinator for Summer Research Programs
9:20 am	Program Overview: Staff
9:50 am	Ice breaker
10: 30 am	Break
10:35 am	Health Center, Health Care Representative
10:50 am	Student Health Insurance, Health Insurance Representative
11:05 am	Privatively Owned Residence Hall, Office Manager
11:20 am	Campus Recreation, Facilities Manager and Associate Director of Programs
11:35 am	Tenant Union, Program Manager
11:50 am	Break
12:00 pm	Office of Inclusion and Intercultural Relations
12:15 pm	Counseling Center, Clinical Counselor
12:30 pm	Public Safety
12:45 pm	Consent Forms Photo release
1:00 pm	Lunch

Weekly seminars. Three times a week, over the course of the summer, students attended three seminars: professional development, research writing, and the culture of graduate school. Each seminar had its own instructor and research writing had two instructors, one for STEM and one for Social Sciences, Humanities, Education, and Business (SHEB). Each seminar met once a week, and the SDTI staff member who instructed the course was responsible for designing the course and syllabus with some

direction from the coordinator. Each seminar met for about seven of the nine weeks of the summer program, and had a specific focus with the expressed goal of assisting students in acclimating to the expectations of graduate school. The weekly seminars were the main ways, programmatically, that students experienced SDTI. The following excerpts were taken from the professional development, research writing in SHEB, and culture of graduate school seminars. Each syllabus can be found in Appendix E. The instructor for research writing in STEM did not provide a syllabus during the writing of this dissertation. Research writing for SHEB was held every Monday from 6-8pm. The research writing for SHEB course description was as follows:

> The writing course for the Social Sciences, Humanities, Education, and Business seeks to further expand students' skills and knowledge in written forms that serve as a foundation for future coursework and research. Specifically, weekly group seminars will focus on different writing genres most commonly approached during graduate studies. These will be interactive sessions promoting dialogue and participation. There may be a possibility in which guest speakers will be invited. Close guidance related to individual research projects will be provided on a weekly basis. In addition, students will have the opportunity to work during set writing time blocks if they choose to do so.

The culture of graduate school was held every Monday from 10-12 noon. The course description is as follows:

> The Culture of Graduate School seminar will complement your [SDTI] experience. Using the text *Behind the Academic Curtain: How to Find Success and Happiness with a PhD* we will discuss the academic pathway students will

experience during your tenure as a doctoral student (specifically at [MSU]). There will also be presentations by faculty and campus administration. Through these presentations and in conjunction with the text; these discussions will enhance your understanding of what it takes to be successful as a graduate student as well as encourage you to take advantage of every opportunity afforded.

Professional Development was held every Wednesday from 6-8 pm. The course description is as follows:

> Professional development encompasses many elements of the graduate school experience: your coursework, research, presentations, and publications form just one component. Professional development also includes elements of personal development such as career development, self-awareness (your understanding of your strengths and opportunities for development), leadership, and professional adaptability (your ability to apply skills learned in one context in a new environment, sometimes called critical thinking). This course is rooted in the belief that graduate training and the experience is holistic. For this reason, throughout this course, we will visit, deconstruct, and reconstruct various personal and professional aspects of professional development. As such, we will work on critical consciousness of self as a scholar as well as tangible professional developments, such as resume/cv reviews, personal teaching and research statements, as well as ways to become connected on campus and at professional conferences.

Living and learning in the Midwest. Developed by the 2014 coordinator, living and learning in the Midwest was developed to provide an example of the kinds of events, spaces, and locations students could be engaged in while attending MSU for graduate school. The focus was on life outside of schoolwork in the local area as well as the ways in which students could be involved in cultural and personal enrichment in other parts of the state. Over the course of the summer, students took part in weekly social events, including venues such as a local horticultural center, the largest major city in the state, bowling, a performing arts center tour, and game nights. Living and Learning in the Midwest was a way of finding the hidden gems of the area and finding a niche that one could be involved in while at MSU. SDTI had traditionally included social events during the summer; however, while Malcolm was coordinator, he began to purposefully choose events and coined the term "Living and Learning in the Midwest," as explained below:

> And, for me personally, that's when I started doing the, uh…I don't know what call them at this point, but it was basically like a "see you around [area of MSU]" kind of thing. Uh, getting to know the state a little bit more, uh, and so we would do different activities to see different parts of the campus as well as like go to [closest urban area] and stuff like that. So, students could see themselves at [area of MSU], 'cause oftentimes students get here and they feel miserable. Or, they can't wait 'til they get to "all but dissertation" [ABD status] so they can leave and go write somewhere else, you know? Not realizing like, "Hey, you can make [area of MSU] home. [The area of MSU] is not something that you're just here stopping by. You know, like, make it part of you right now cause otherwise you will be miserable, and it's gonna be hard to finish if you don't find a space." It's

just like any space; you can always find a way to sort of make it your own. So, I wanted to show students different parts of the campus like that.

Malcolm argued that engagement in out-of-class activities and learning more about the area was a way for students to understand that students could have a life at MSU and throughout the area. Malcolm saw this as another way for students to develop community and place while in graduate school. Living and Learning in the Midwest and the entire SDTI 2014 summer calendar can be found below in Figure 4.2.

Figure 4.2. SDTI 2014 Calendar.

June 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2 Arrival	3 Arrival	4 Orientation Professional Development Seminar	5	6 Welcome Luncheon Friday Night Live	7
8	9 Culture of Graduate School Seminar Research Writing Seminar	10	11 Library Tour Professional Development Seminar - Independent Study Proposal Due	12 Garden Tour & Tea Ceremony	13	14 ARC Day
15	16 Culture of Graduate School Seminar Research Writing Seminar $$	17	18 Professional Development Seminar	19	20	21 Trip →
22 →	23 Culture of Graduate School Seminar Research Writing Seminar	24	25 Professional Development Seminar	26 Center Tour & Uncorked	27	28

July 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
29	30 Culture of Graduate School Seminar Research Writing Seminar $$	1	2 Professional Development Seminar	3	4 *Holiday* *County Freedom Celebration (Optional)*	5
6	7 Culture of Graduate School Seminar Research Writing Seminar Last Day to Register for	8	9 Professional Development Seminar	10 Writing Retreat & Lake Front Networking Social	11	12
13	14 Culture of Graduate School Seminar Research Writing Seminar $$	15 Research Presentations	16 Professional Development Seminar	17 Research Presentations Cosmic Bowling & Pizza Networking Social	18	19
20	21 Culture of Graduate School Seminar Research Writing Seminar	22	23	24 SRS	25 SRS	26 Awards Brunch
27	28 Exit Interviews $$	29 Exit Interviews	30 Exit Interviews	31 Exit Interviews	1	2

SDTI Calendar

Wednesday 6/4	Orientation	9:00am - 2:00pm	
Wednesdays 6/4 - 7/16	Professional Development Seminar	6:00pm - 8:00pm	Siebel Center Auditorium & DCL 1310
Friday 6/6	"Friday Night Live"	6:00pm - 9:00pm	
Friday 6/6	Welcome Luncheon	11:30am - 1:00pm	
Mondays 6/9 - 7/21	Culture of Graduate School Seminar	10:00am - 12:00pm	DCL 1310
Mondays 6/9 - 7/21	Research Writing Seminar	6:00pm - 8:00pm	HAS - STEM -
Wednesday 6/11	Library Day	8:30am - 12:00pm	
Wednesday 6/11	Independent Study Proposal Due	5:00pm	Online
Thursday 6/12	Garden Tour & Tea Ceremony	3:00pm - 5:00pm	
Saturday 6/14	ARC Day	1:30pm - 5:00pm	Activities & Rec Center
Saturday - Sunday 6/21 - 6/22	Cultural Enrichment Tour	8:00am - 8:00pm	TBA
Thursday 6/26	Krannert Center Tour & Uncorked	4:00pm - 6:00pm	Center for the Performing Arts
Friday 7/4	*County Freedom Celebration, Optional*	*9:00am - 10:00pm*	*Center Parking Lot*
Monday 7/7	Last Day to Register for SRS	5:00pm	Online
Tuesday & Thursday 7/15 & 7/17	Research Presentations	6:00pm - 8:00pm	
Thursday 7/10	Writing Retreat	8:00am - 5:00pm	
Thursday 7/10	Social	5:00pm - 8:00pm	Lake Boat House
Thursday 7/17	Bowling & Pizza Networking Social	8:00pm - 11:00pm	Union Recreation Room
Thursday 7/24	Summer Research Symposium	8:00am - 7:00pm	Conference Center
Friday 7/25	Summer Research Symposium	8:00am - 7:00pm	IConference Center
Saturday 7/26	Awards Brunch	11:00am - 1:00pm	
Monday - Thursday 7/28 - 7/31	Exit Interviews	By Appointment	TBA

University Student Research Symposium (pseudonym) and closing brunch. SDTI finished the summer program with two culminating events: the university student research symposium and a closing brunch. Schools from across the Midwest also brought their students to participate in the research symposium. Student participants from other institutions were also engaged in research over the summer, similar to the experience of those from MSU. Over two days, students participated in poster sessions, research roundtables, and oral presentations. Faculty, staff, and students came out to support the hard work of SDTI members, and for many this served as the first formal introduction to the university community, their areas of research interests, and who they were as novice researchers.

The day after the symposium both the undergraduate research program and SDTI came together for the closing awards brunch. This included awards that were provided to students from program staff and closing remarks to end the summer. Students often stayed after the program was over to take pictures or socialize before leaving. The awards brunch was an opportunity to acknowledge the hard work that everyone had put in and a chance to formally conclude the summer program.

Conclusion

Since 1999, SDTI has had the goal of acclimating new doctoral students of color to graduate work during the summer before their first semester at MSU. With financial assistance from the Graduate College, and inspiration from similar programs at two other institutions, SDTI continues in its mission at the time of this writing. Program beginnings were a direct result of examples from two other institutions, one in the Midwest and the other in the Southeast. These institutions, like many in the 1980s and 1990s, provided

opportunities to increase access to and within graduate education for students of color in response to the low numbers of students of color coming in and graduating out of PhD programs (Kraus, Henke, Nevill, Linnard, Pflueger, & Mattox, 2008). The program founder, Maria, did not envision SDTI as remedial and wanted the program to attract high-achieving students who were interested in starting in the summer, getting acclimated to the MSU community, and learning the values, expectations, and nuances of graduate work.

Over the years, the evolution of SDTI has been influenced by three main constituent groups: upper-level administrators and faculty, students, and staff members. Changes to the program have occurred almost every year and have included things such as changes in the time of day events are held, writing requirements, and how many seminars occur each week. Staff, who are advanced graduate students, come to the program with their own experiences and expertise, which also influences the day-to-day particulars of the program. SDTI sees it as a priority to hire graduate students, as they are most recently involved in graduate life and bring a wealth of knowledge and experience. Not without its challenges, negotiating and balancing the needs of the students with the expectations of the institution and of faculty continues. Staff perceived themselves as partners willing to compromise for the betterment of the student experience. Furthermore, staff perceived an additional challenge to be communicating the current program to faculty who worked with the program for many years and only viewed SDTI in one way.

For the students who participated in 2014, the main components of their SDTI experience were orientation; seminars to support their personal and academic development; social events that allowed them to become familiar with the area and get to

know one another; and the research symposium and awards banquet. Even with changes over the year, the main goal of SDTI has remained the same: to introduce new students of color to graduate life at MSU. Challenges occur, changes continue to happen, and the fact that each student conducts research with a faculty advisor provides an even deeper contextual difference to each student's summer experience.

CHAPTER 5:

MISSION AND PURPOSES OF SDTI FROM THE VIEW OF FACULTY AND STAFF

SDTI would not exist without the dedicated staff and faculty that work with students over the summer. Spending time with faculty over the summer provides with students an initial understanding of the values and expectations of the department and field. Concomitantly, students can build relationships with faculty, department staff, and peers in the program while developing an early research agenda. This chapter addresses the following research question and subsidiary question: how do faculty, graduate administrators, and SDTI staff view the program? Further, what do faculty, graduate administrators, and SDTI staff describe the purpose and mission of SDTI to be?

Faculty participation is a critical component of the SDTI program, from admitting students into degree programs to writing letters of support for the SDTI application. Furthermore, faculty beliefs about SDTI and its mission and purpose determine which students they recommend for the program, and how they work with students over the summer. Similarly, SDTI staff, many of whom are advanced graduate students themselves, have a particular understanding of the mission of SDTI and a specific approach to how they instruct and mentor the new students.

When I first began this dissertation, I assumed that faculty's view of the program might vary based on their departmental priorities, and what they personally believed graduate students needed to be academically successful. I assumed that staff, having actively applied to work with the program, and most having themselves been previous participants, would view the mission and purpose from a critical lens, citing the challenges experienced by students of color and the ways in which institutions should

support doctoral students. I was particularly interested in understanding whether the ways in which faculty, staff, and administrators viewed the mission and purpose of the program impacted how they interacted with students or how they enacted program practices during the summer.

What I learned during data collection is that, despite subtle differences, most faculty, staff, and administrators view SDTI in the same way. All agreed that SDTI is needed on campus and that it seeks to acclimate new graduate students of color to the university and department. They also agreed that its mission was to prepare students of color to move forward full-speed in the fall on research; to connect with other new doctoral students of color; to learn the cultural expectations of graduate school; and to reinforce practices that might help mitigate the challenges experienced by moving into a new environment. This shared perspective shaped the beliefs, practices, and ultimately the student experience.

In this chapter, I examine how faculty, staff, and administrators view the mission and purpose of SDTI. Ideology about SDTI and purpose of the program is core to its function. The overarching mission of SDTI concerns the belief that doctoral students of color can benefit from assistance in acclimating to both the discipline and campus culture prior to the start of the fall semester. This belief includes the building of social capital in hopes of mitigating the effects of systematic educational disparity. I argue that the ways in which the mission and purpose is viewed has a direct impact both on who is accepted into the program and the ways in which staff arrange program components. This theme is supported by five patterns. I begin by discussing the first two patterns of how faculty and staff see the mission and purpose of the program, which is steeped in personal experience

and the hidden curriculum—the unspoken rules of graduate education and the academy. I then address the third pattern, examining the mission and the staffs' experiences as former student participants in SDTI. These experiences shaped the ways in which summer staff help students to understand the values and expectations of graduate school. I end the chapter by discussing the final two patterns, in which faculty and staff discuss the program's mission in relation to who they believe the program is well-suited for and how the program serves as a conduit for facilitating a culture of community.

Discussing the Purpose and Mission

The following statement came directly from the SDTI website and communicates the stated purpose and mission of the program and what students can hope to gain from participating:

> The purpose of the [Summer Doctoral Transition Initiative] at [Mid-West State University] is to provide incoming graduate students from U.S. populations underrepresented in graduate programs on our campus with a nine-week orientation to graduate study. The program provides participants with an early introduction to graduate study at [MSU] and an opportunity to work with a summer research advisor in their department. An orientation to the department through [SDTI] will assist participants in becoming socialized into the department culture, as well as afford them an advanced opportunity to become quickly prepared for the rigors of their graduate program. There are three major areas that are important to graduate student success that SDTI weeks to address:

Academic

Three credit hours of graduate coursework is provided through independent study "Culture of Graduate School" and "Professional Development" seminars, technical research development, and oral skills development.

Social

Opportunities for networking with campus administrators, faculty, and students from across campus, social activities with current graduate students, and early socialization into your department.

Cultural/Environmental

Introduction to community programs, services, and activities that meet specific cultural needs and demands, organized visits to cultural and research centers on campus, orientation to respective department and/or lab, library orientation and tour, and introduction to campus support networks and faculty mentoring.

As stated in the literature, learning occurs through social interaction, and "language policy is processual, dynamic, and in motion" (McCarty, 2011 p. 2), and can be inferred from practices and beliefs that facilitate cultural production through social practices. In reading the SDTI website, I asked myself, "what is the purpose of SDTI and who does the program serve?" As students of color come to SDTI, the first message they hear, see, and experience is related to a set of intentional tasks and developed curriculum that introduces them to ways to talk, how to maneuver departments and manage advisors, how to understand the culture of a large, predominantly white, research intensive institution, and other tips to fit in and be "socialized." These socialization practices send a message that academia does not see students of color as prepared for the culture, and that

they must adapt, change, and shift in order to be accepted, matriculate, and produce legitimate scholarship.

Words such as "orientation" and phrases like "provides students with an early introduction" regulate practices for life in academia, which can marginalize some students who may speak, act, or look different than the dominant group. "Who" and "what" are we socializing students to? Which practices are considered acceptable, and which must be developed or changed? To this day, I wonder how students can still exercise agency within an academic system rife with normalizing practices designed to mold them into a scholar deemed worthy by those who determine what acceptable is? For this reason, it is critical to examine how faculty and staff view SDTI, and the ways they speak about the mission and purpose of the program. These ideologies shape how the program is executed, its components, and the ways students come to understand the values and expectations of doctoral study.

In the context of personal experience. The ways in which faculty, administrators, and staff think about the purpose of SDTI differs based on their personal experiences. Staff members who participated in SDTI as students often situated their understanding the program's mission within the context of their former experience as program participant. Even when asked to answer questions from the perspective of staff members in 2014, those who participated in SDTI as students referred to their prior participation with the program. Staff members, such as the program founder and David, who had not themselves participated in the program, spoke of the mission in a straightforward way, citing the goals of the program as laid out on the website and other printed materials. In contrast, staff who participated previously as students spoke about

the mission as situated within their own experiences. Their experiences coming from Minority Serving Institutions, and previous full-time employment experiences, shaped their ideas about the mission of SDTI.

Sounia, for example, worked for three years before returning to school; in her accounting, participating in SDTI helped her to reaffirm her readiness for doctoral level work, improve self-efficacy (raising perception of self as it relates to graduate school readiness), and get back into the mode of writing. This understanding of what SDTI did for her shaped her view of the purpose and mission of the program. For Elsa, a research writing instructor in the Humanities, Business, Education, and Social Sciences in 2014 and a 2012 participant of the program, her role as staff member saw an evolution from her understanding as a former participant to her desire to send a clear message regarding advocacy for students of color to university administration. Table 5.1 is a data matrix displaying the above stated comparison of discussing of the mission of SDTI.

Table 5.1 Program administrators and staff discuss mission cont'd

Name	Program Role	Talk About Mission
Program Founder	Oversaw program until 2013	It was again intended to give students an opportunity to come to campus early, uh, to become quickly acclimatized to (institution) and to their graduate program.
David	Currently Supervises, Coordinator in 2012	I see the purpose of the program as being, helping students from traditionally under-represented populations to make a quick and effective transition from their previous institution to graduate study here at (institution). So, I see our primary goal as bringing students on to be quickly acclimated to the graduate school culture here. The larger goal and scope of our program is for these students to be successful.
Alberto	Coordinator for 2006 and 2007, program participant	I think the purpose, in my opinion, is to create a strong foundation, to finish a doctoral degree. You know it's way in the genesis of the doctoral program to really work hard to gain a solid footing, and not with the academics per se, because if you were smart enough to get into (institution), you are smart enough to get out with a doctoral degree. I think it's based on your department because it's not the academics that kill you: it's the culture of the department that kills you.
Malcolm	Coordinator for 2013, 2014, former research methods instructor, program participant in 2007	Um, for the most part in it's very simplest form to help students of color transition to this new institution… for those students who are coming from other institutions, and who just really don't have a good idea of what it means to go to grad school. I definitely think that, sort of familiarizing yourself in this sort of cohort format with safe spaces, and safe people on campus. You know, I think prior to grad school you only hear these sort of horror stories about what's expected of you, but not realizing that it can also be a nurturing experience. And

Table 5.1 Program administrators and staff discuss mission cont'd

		especially for a lot of us who are coming from HBCUs, you're so used to being so fully connected to all of the faculty, staff, and students on campus that in many ways a [SDTI] is sort of like a HBCU-type of experience for you because it's one way to make the campus smaller.
Carlos	Culture of Graduate School Instructor for 2014, Coordinator 2008-2011, program participant in 2005	You know that's the purpose of [SDTI] is you're getting this training so that you can be that much more successful as a PhD student, with the goal of graduating…but with the sort of more specific goal of ascertaining a faculty position. Um, that's sort of an additional component, not necessarily required 'cos many [SDTI] students go into various different fields. Um, different types of fields. Um, but definitely that goal of graduating with the PhD. Had it not been for [SDTI], I don't think I would have made it through graduate school. That's some real stuff right there. I don't think I would have made it through, because what [SDTI] gave me was those tools that I needed to be successful.
Elsa	Writing Instructor for the Humanities, Business, Education, and Social Science students, program participant in 2012	I think that, from my experience as a participant not as staff, I would say as a participant I thought that the purpose of [SDTI] was, it was kind of, it was kind of mixed, it was a program that was based on helping underrepresented students acclimate to a place like the (institution), to kind of help us you know set, hit the ground running in the sense of, allowing us to have access to things that once others started we would be okay. So that's what I think I had imagined like that's what [SDTI] was for, as a participant. And as staff, I still think that is part of it I mean of just like having this opportunity... like administratively, I think that the purpose is to show the administration also why, that we are so very much under-represented and that we need a space, to navigate the things that we are gonna go through because it is not the same experience for people of color on this campus.
Sounia	Professional Development Instructor, program participant	Um, the purpose of [SDTI] is to connect and prepare, uh, grad students, and I would say grad students of color because in my year they were like all of color. So to connect incoming grad students, masters to PhD level, mostly PhD students uh to campus prior to everyone else getting here. For me, it was uh highly beneficial because I had been out of school for 3 years. So, coming back as not only a professional/back to student, but also I was older than most, than everybody I think in my [SDTI] program and so feeling that way I was also like, "I don't know if I can write anymore." "I don't know if I can, like, understand statistics anymore." So, it allowed me the opportunity to really regain my confidence. So, I see that…I see that that's what [SDTI] is.
Willie	Faculty Member in the Social Sciences, Humanities, Education, and Business, worked with SDTI participants for 14 years	Um, what comes to mind is an effort to facilitate students making the transition from undergraduate work to graduate work to do two things; one, to familiarize them ... to begin the process of familiarizing them with what the expectations are for graduate school and what they can anticipate encountering what they should anticipate wanting to experience in terms of professional development as an academic. The other piece is to have to acclimate themselves to this environment particularly because [SDTI] was designed around the transitional needs of students of color and we were getting students of color from a variety of different context.
Derek	Faculty Member in the Social Sciences, Humanities, Education, and Business, Associate Dean during the development of SDTI	I would take the summer and say, "this is what I am going to focus on." And I saw [SDTI] in the same way. That it allowed students to take an area, it could be an area that, um, is missing in their academic portfolio, it could be an area where they ... or an area of weakness you know that they didn't have particular skills but they could take those, um, summer weeks, summer months and really dig deeply in those areas and come away feeling very confident about what they were doing. And that's what I saw.

A consistent theme throughout faculty and staff's understanding is that the program is a point of acclimation to graduate education, and in particular the culture of graduate education at MSU. Acclimation can be understood as the process of adapting to one's surroundings or environment. The extent to which a student successfully acclimates as a doctoral student, and a doctoral student of color, determines perceived success (Weidman & Stein, 2006). All participants spoke to the program's goal of assisting in this process. However, what is "new" for each student depends on their personal and educational background.

While Maria, the program founder, and David spoke generally of this adaptation to the campus and to doctoral education, Alberto, Malcolm, Carlos, Elsa, and Sounia identified various facets of what adapting to MSU might look like. For example, Alberto saw adjusting to the department climate as one of the most important facets of adaptation. Malcolm breaks down how acclimating might be different for a student coming to MSU, a predominantly white space, from another institutional type. So, for new doctoral students of color, beginning at MSU adds an additional layer of complexity beyond the academic. Program staff and administrators see the main goal of SDTI as creating an affirming space that builds additional self-confidence and allows students time to learn how to adapt to and become part of a new environment.

The idea of acclimation and adaptation through training to be successful, as suggested by Carlos, can have multiple meanings. Based on the kinds of seminars offered, as well as language used by other staff, the program discusses academic norms and expectations for students as well as additional norms and expectations for students of color. Words Malcolm used such as "safe space" and "safe people" communicate the

perception that not all areas of campus are friendly or affirming ones. Teaching new students about affirming spaces at MSU, and introducing students to those who are supportive of the experiences of students of color, is seen as part of the education and "acclimation" of new doctoral students of color. Being fully connected to those who have your best interest in mind both academically and personally is a strong aspect of SDTI's mission and vision, and influences how staff communicate norms and expectations.

One of the most surprising things in asking interviewees about the mission of SDTI, was that no two faculty answers were the same. For example, in Willie's perspective, the program's mission of addressing the needs of students of color extends beyond academic concerns. It is well noted in the literature that faculty's view of race and racism influences their student advising relationships. In Felder and Baker's Interest Convergence Framework, in high convergence environments, racial policies are enacted and regular assessments of climate occur. Students of color are supported in their research interests and faculty serve as leaders on issues of equity and are fully engaged in issues of racial identity (Felder & Baker, 2013). Willie's perception of the mission of SDTI is informed by his understanding of the needs of students of color, and connects with how program administrators and staff also view the program. In contrast, Derek saw the mission of the program as an opportunity for new students to fill gaps in knowledge, or to work on academic areas that require time not afforded during the school year. When working with the SDTI students in his department, Derek has students choose several books to read and annotate, so that they can begin to think about an early research agenda. Discussions of these issues as articulated by staff are presented in the next subsection.

Mission as navigation of the hidden curriculum. Grounding this mission in previous personal experience and focusing on acclimation helped administrators and staff members think about the unspoken rules that exist for people of color in the academy. Understanding the program as an opportunity to uncover the hidden curriculum, staff discussed the mission in the context of teaching new students the unwritten expectations and values of graduate study during this crucial transition period.

Through the following discussion of staff comments, I paint a landscape of unwritten expectations and values that are tied to becoming visible and valued within graduate school. Sounia, the professional development seminar instructor, for example, explicitly references her experience that students of color, like faculty of color, have a "tax" of working harder for the same recognition as other students. She regards this as an unwritten rule. When discussing the purpose of SDTI, Sounia was very clear about how knowledge of the hidden curriculum is important and that the transmission of this critical knowledge grounds the program:

> The program allows space to sort of find out what you need to…work a little harder on, or maybe what things you're really good at and it gives you that self-confidence before the semester starts. The connection is cool; it helps connect students [to the idea of hitting the ground running]. Particularly just because students of color, and people of color, are always [examined by] an extra set of requirements that are unspoken, you know, like you have to do more, you have to be more. If you are a professor, you have to publish twice as much—that sort of thing.

Malcolm also expounds on this collective theme of the racialization of graduate school. Rather than locating that racism in lowered expectations that must be countered strongly, Malcolm instead emphasizes the mission of SDTI as teaching new students to navigate various spaces. This navigation includes the transition to life as a graduate student and learning what that means; it involves learning how to thrive but also how to maneuver a new campus and space that also has racial nuances:

> So, I think that's what [SDTI] does really, really well in terms of that transition piece. This is what exists in [local area]. This is what exists in the state. Here's what you should avoid, here's what you should do over here. These are the expectations that you may know about, but these are the unspoken expectations that also exist. So, really sort of...laying a good foundation for what it means to be a really good grad student, and how to sort of navigate and negotiate those sort of racial/cultural spaces that exist on campus also.

Malcolm references the racial/cultural spaces on campus, even though he doesn't go into great detail about how he conceptualizes these spaces. Based on previous literature in Chapter 2 and student experiences described later in Chapter 6, one can imagine that these are spaces where one may experience racial or gender-based microaggressions. In addition to unwritten rules about countering expectations of quality, then, are expectations across diverse aspects of campus. Most staff did not discuss rejecting these expectations, or transforming them, but rather understanding and adapting to them, and coping with the process. This represents a cycle of socialization passed on from one grad student (staff) member as well as full-time staff member to another, with the best of intentions. It is how they have all been socialized. Continuing this theme,

Carlos also spoke about the mission in SDTI as helping new graduate students of color navigate a new climate; to navigate and understand the politics; and to negotiate racialized spaces as students of color:

> Um, and I also worked with students on understanding that process of being a graduate student. So that socialization process of...you know, you have to be acculturated into your department. You have to understand the politics of your department, and along with that comes...you know, it could be barriers that will be faced. Such as racial barriers, stereotype barriers. So, we talked about that, um, and sort of how that can impact students; and I think it's very important to highlight the students in [SDTI] are under-represented students. Under-represented students already face a specific set of societal barriers. When you approach a situation, you have to be able to adjust to the natural surroundings. Um...in graduate school, especially when you're an underrepresented student, you have to...you *have to be able to adjust and fit in* [emphasis added], and you have to be able to withstand a certain amount of rejection that may exist within certain departments. Um, now that's not a good definition, I think that's...in terms of how I would discuss it, I think that, that sort of...that adjustment, that socialization of being able to be a part of a larger situation.

The strong focus on adjustment, learning to cope with historically white spaces, and learning the unspoken rules of graduate school was paralleled by other staff members as they thought about the mission and purpose of SDTI. Alberto took it a step further, articulating that for students of color, the process goes beyond just getting to know the unspoken rules of graduate study and how to navigate hostile spaces as students of color.

In his opinion, the real challenge becomes overcoming a lack of belonging and lack of concern from the faculty:

> How do you fit in and how do you get your vibe in spaces that were not traditionally made for us? So, with the support of the Educational Equity Office, what are the things that you need to do?... There was an expectation that as an incoming graduate student, you would have a sense of what being a graduate student was all about…Anybody can do the work, it's how do you survive professors you think that are your allies but at the end of the day they really don't care about you. There are a lot of students that encounter that in grad school. And I think what [SDTI] did was create space that when you are doubting yourself and you feel like you aren't going to survive the rigors, or the *bs* to be honest— there is a community that will support you. And you realize that the allies that you made were really invested in your success. They pushed you. When we did IRB, for example, what is expected when you publish, what about conference presentations [and] where do you go, funding—departments are very quiet about where those things are: some people get funding and others do not get funding. There was a way for us to tie in the politics of graduate school. There are a lot of politics.

Here, Alberto emphasized the role of the institution in the success or failure of graduate students of color. Specifically, as new graduate students seek to uncover the hidden curriculum, faculty engagement, or disengagement, can affect this process, and as a result students may not find the kinds of connections or community necessary to thrive within the department. Alberto's point of view becomes especially important when we

think about the ways in which students learn the hidden policies of a department, especially when finding connection and community can have an impact on things such as program funding, research partnerships, being asked to serve on committees, and other non-public invitations that tend to be offered to highly connected and engaged doctoral students.

Overall, Sounia, Malcolm, Carlos, and Alberto emphasize that there are unwritten rules—

both academic and racial—that are important to address as part of the mission of SDTI. Staff perceived that part of the SDTI mission as providing a space for you to learn and navigate those expectations. In addition, what we have also come to understand is that the focus seems to be on acclimation and fitting in once the hidden curriculum is learned, rather than working to dismantle these uneven power structures. Staff see the mission as passing on the lessons they learned when participating in the program, which may have the unintended consequence of reinforcing the cycle of expectations for students of color. When staff members use knowledge of the hidden curriculum to pass on much needed information to new students, they are also enacting the mission as socialization—i.e., perpetuating a standard view of graduate school.

Scholars have focused attention on the hidden curriculum as an essential area of socialization study (Acker, 2001; Costello, 2001; Gair & Mullens, 2001; Margolis, Solatenko, Acker, & Gair, 2001). The framework itself has been used to examine specific skills that reinforce the social functions in higher education and the social reproduction of inequality (Margolis, et al., 2001). In the context of graduate education, the hidden curriculum can range from notions of what it means to be a good student, to requirements

of the program, and to cultural understandings of one's discipline (Acker, 2001). I found that SDTI staff believe that dynamic and often secretive nuances of institutional culture are embedded across the academic timeline, and that understanding these nuances greatly influences a student's ability to understand and acclimate to academic culture.

The last theme of this section focuses on staff member's understanding that part of the SDTI mission is the visibility of the hidden curriculum. This theme manifested itself in the ways in which staff prepared and taught seminar classes. The first participant, Malcolm, demonstrates that there may be differing assumptions about valued life work between students and faculty members. He utilized SDTI seminars as one way to communicate what he learned about these differences to new students. Malcolm's story was particularly powerful as he discussed the way he learned the unspoken rules as it relates to preparing for the job you want, despite what may be considered the most acceptable or expected route after graduation. For a doctoral student, this typically means gaining a tenure-track faculty position. Malcolm spent a large portion of his graduate school career focused on finishing his degree, and not focusing on the particular experiences that would make him a viable candidate for employment as a student affairs administrator. A year before degree completion, Malcolm entered the job market; however, he did not have any interviews and began to question why he wasn't getting called. After comparing his CV to the job postings, he realized that he had spent his time moving through degree requirements rather than obtaining the types of experiences that would earn him the job. This pivotal experience prompted him to not only take more time to complete his degree so that he could be competitive on the market, but to also develop

a workshop in SDTI as well as present the same workshop at conferences, making this unspoken rule in the hidden curriculum visible.

> I developed a workshop...uh that I called, Self-Reality Check: from doing enough to get the degree to doing enough to get the job. So, I was like a late-bloomer when it comes to this whole grad school thing. I was hitting all my check marks, you know. Qualifying exams: check; did this: check; you know I was…a check marker. Uh, until I had my moment when I was able to be like, "Hold up, this ain't right. You know, I don't think I'm being honest with myself and saying what I really want to do." Because you know there's this, also, this unspoken expectation that if you're pursuing a PhD, that you're supposed to be a scholar in your field, and that you're supposed to demonstrate your scholarship through constant publications, and you know the key prize is that you landed a tenure-track faculty position. I wanted to be hired as administration, but you know in grad school oftentimes you can't say that, because if you say that then faculty may start treating you differently. They won't call you in to teach...for teaching opportunities, research opportunities, other professional development opportunities and the other side of it is, they don't know how to be good mentors to you because that's not a path that they took. And, so, you get to be that grad student that sits over there on the quad vs. the grad student that's always in the office and being called upon to do different things. So, I tried to bring that conversation mostly through that workshop into that space, and it's also how I continued to mentor students one-on-one.

Malcolm's narrative demonstrates that learning the unspoken rules around career preparation later in the program can impact time to degree and the types of jobs one is considered for. It also shows that he worries about how students can be marginalized if their goals do not align with the academic expectations faculty have of them. Transmitting this knowledge to new students became, and continues to be, central to his work as a staff member, and Malcolm chose to do this through program seminars and the mentorship of individual students.

Similarly, Sounia also worked to incorporate the visibility of unspoken rules in her professional development seminar. She chose to teach students about the importance of communicating with faculty; she thought that this was even more important for students coming from different institutional types, where they might be used to interacting with faculty in a particular way.

> Um, well one of the big ones was like talking about, like, interactions [in seminar]. Um, and so the other things we talked about were, like, who to talk to on campus; like, who is a good resource. I remember talking about how even though people may look just like you, there's also a potential that they will not be "for you." So, um, some students came from Historically Black Colleges and Universities, so for me that was a big deal to say: that I have been proven wrong time and time again about people who I thought were really (who looked just like me) super supportive or I thought were, and then they weren't.

In communicating hidden expectations with students, both Malcolm and Sounia discussed the ways in which expectations are communicated through seminars. Seminars serve as a primary source for communication about both verbal and non-verbal

expectations concerning climate, academia, job expectations, and communicating with faculty. Notions of how race figures into interactions with faculty can be seen most notably from Sounia, although it was also discussed by Carlos.

Staff described the mission as an opportunity to include aspects of the hidden curriculum. Staff members' seminar discussion topics were based on highlighting hidden curriculum topics such as preparation for employment and how email communications were perceived; these were seen as areas that needed the support of SDTI. Malcolm and Sounia communicated the learning of norms that are not often highlighted or shared, but nonetheless, deeply influence students' experiences within academic life.

Mission as a program for who? When faculty and staff discussed the mission, they also brought up particular students for whom the program is most helpful, and described how the mission of SDTI assisted students in developing in these areas. Overwhelmingly, faculty and staff identified the facilitation of increased self-confidence as being important in helping new doctoral students socialize to the role of being a graduate student, particularly when it comes to research and research identity. The summer provided an optimal time for students to hone in on areas such as research methods and their identity as a doctoral student. Sounia believes that part of the mission of the program is to help students work on skills that will help them become stronger during the school year, which can positively impact their self-confidence and understanding that they belong in the academic space.

> Now I know that everyone makes it their own, but I do think that it allows the space to sort of, like, find out what you need to need to work a little harder on, or maybe what things you're really good at, and it gives you that, um, like, self-

> confidence before the semester starts, because once the semester starts like you get grades on everything. There's a high potential for, if you don't...if you aren't confident in what your skill is, it's easy to sort of like lose that focus and be like, maybe I don't belong here. Because of you know writing or whatever.

Malcolm agreed with Sounia's notions of SDTI as a program that provides affirmation or reaffirmation of students' academic ability. He added that his role was to step in and assist students in the development of their research identity so that their confidence could develop. While this aspect came about in response to a lack of faculty engagement, it is still part of the mission of the program, which is the growth of research knowledge.

> My role as [SDTI] Coordinator sort of changed a little bit because I ended up having to take a more active role with the students, in terms of their actual...the development of their recent projects. Because, sometimes during the summer even though you may have a faculty mentor, which was usually a students' advisor, often times they were not present. Uh, sometimes they were gone for the summer, and so sometimes the students may be out there a little lonely, and it could be their first time doing research or just sometimes not have the full confidence to just move forward on their own. So, I ended up having to spend quite a bit of time sort of helping students individually develop their projects.

Reflecting on the mentoring process as a faculty member, Willie also discussed the importance of getting to know students and being engaged with new students, thus supporting growth and reinforcing academic ability. Engagement helps to develop a sense of belonging, and serves to close the gap between the doctoral student and the faculty

member. In turn, this helps to reinforce the notion that a student belongs and is fully capable of succeeding in a doctoral program. Willie actively recognizes the faculty role in helping to reassure new doctoral students of color that they do belong in graduate school, in the department, and, ultimately, in the field.

> I think the mentoring process and introducing students towards it is extremely important. It would be too easy for students not to be successful for the wrong reasons and I think [SDTI] provides an opportunity to limit or prevent that from happening. I think there are a lot of students who come in, and I've heard them talk about it, they say, I think I'm an imposter, I am not supposed to be here. Nobody that I know has ever done anything like this. What am I doing here? Well, I think [SDTI] is an opportunity to help get students to be on to that.

Common among Sounia, Malcolm, and Willie is the theme that SDTI provides a space for students to affirm academic ability and to increase self-confidence. Communicating with students about research, developing faculty/student relationships, and connecting with SDTI staff who are also advanced doctoral students all hold the potential to reinforce positive socialization experiences. Research suggests that these kinds of experiences increase feelings of belonging and communicate to students that they are vital members of the university and department (Weidman & Stein, 2004). For students of color in particular, affirmation and intention engagement also influence retention and socialization experiences (Felder, 2010). What we have found among students, as will be seen in Chapter 6, is that SDTI was perceived to have influenced the extent to which they felt connected to the department and to their affirmation of belonging in the profession.

Faculty and staff also suggested that SDTI does particularly well in acclimating students from other institutional types. Many students coming from Minority Serving Institutions, Liberal Arts colleges, or 4-year non-research intensive institutions report benefitting greatly from attending SDTI in the summer, which offers them a chance to get used to the pace and campus culture that is unique to a research intensive PWI. This also connects to what Malcolm said about the mission as being to assist students who transitioned from different institutional types such as HBCUs. David, the Associate Director and head of summer programs, argues that it is important for students to grow accustomed to the culture of MSU as a result of participation in SDTI:

> Um, very often as a research-run institution, we have a certain culture of graduate school that isn't often found in other schools. Whether they be Liberal Arts schools, or 4-year schools, or even smaller research institutions. So, I see our primary goal as bringing students on to be quickly acclimated to the graduate school culture here.

Alberto also reflected on his own perspective on who SDTI is well-suited for and centers that understanding within his own experience as a doctoral student coming from a private university.

> So, basically, we looked at what are the issues and what are the particular pitfalls that students of color encounter when they enter a graduate program? So, originally the point of the program was to give students who had graduated from non-research intensive institutions like [MSU] and who had gone to Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Hispanic Serving Institutions an opportunity to transfer to the rigors of research one. I think that that was the intent.

Malcolm's comments were in line with David's and Alberto's, as he also thought about the mission in terms of supporting students who are coming from different institutional types. He believed that this is the program's first goal, and that students who attended MSU for their undergraduate degree already have a sense of the culture and surrounding community. This view is particularly interesting given that SDTI regularly admits MSU undergraduate students into the program. In addition to helping students from other institutions learn the community and culture of the campus, Malcolm also talked about an important component in helping these students feel at home on campus and to identify services that meet their personal and cultural needs—things that most others who are from the community may take for granted.

> For the most part in its very simplest form [it is] to help students of color transition to this new institution. I don't think it really should be for students who are already at [MSU], 'cos there's a different type of transition that they're gonna have to go through in terms of what it means to be an undergrad at [MSU] vs. being a grad student at [MSU]. That's like a different transition. But [it's] really for those students who are coming from other institutions, and who just really don't have a good idea of what it means to go to grad school. In some cases, they may have never even have stepped foot on [the MSU] campus. Um, but I definitely think that, sort of familiarizing yourself in this sort of cohort format with safe spaces, and safe people on campus.

Willie, Malcolm, David, and Alberto all stressed the importance of interaction with faculty for students from different institutions. Willie discussed the importance of serving students from different institutional types from a historical perspective and how

the challenging racial history of MSU factors into the importance of acclimation and engaging students.

> Because so many of our students may have come from MSI, Minority Serving Institutions, and may not have experienced this kind of context before, not that they would not have had this white faculty before; because, even if they went to an MSI they were likely to have had white faculty, and white faculty would probably be working in a context like that, or working in MSIs wouldn't necessarily work in the same way or engage students in the same way that they would engage them here. The other thing is that the concentration of expertise here would be somewhat different than it might be in many MSI's or universities at a different tier.

What is most interesting about notions of institutional acclimation and SDTI as being a program well-suited for students from different institutional types, is that MSU undergraduate students have been admitted into the program. Surprisingly, as will be discussed in Chapter 6, SDTI students who attended MSU as undergraduates reported similar needs to those who did not attend as undergraduate students. This has important implications for how staff and faculty subconsciously perceive different institutional types and their perceptions of the ability of particular institutions to prepare students for the culture of graduate school. Inherent assumptions are made about what students are well-suited for, without consideration of time away from school, or other circumstances that can be a part of any student context regardless of the institution from which they graduated.

In summary, faculty and staff perception that SDTI is well-suited for students as they work on self-confidence, the development of research, and acclimate to a new institutional type all influence their understanding and discussion of the overall mission of SDTI. Strong mentorship and engagement has helped new doctoral students of color develop the self-efficacy to understand and believe that they are supposed to be in graduate school and that their admission was no mistake. There is a shared understanding that students who attended MSU as undergrads are already familiar with the environment, and the program should focus on students who are coming from schools other than MSU, and other institutional types in particular, to provide the best opportunity to learn a new academic culture.

"Mi familia, my family": Creating a culture of community. In discussions with faculty and staff, community-building consistently came up as a key aspect of the mission of SDTI. This was also consistent with students' notions of how they learned the values and expectations of graduate education, which will be covered in Chapter 6. Developing connections with other students who are also new to graduate school is central to acclimating to a new environment. Thinking about their own experience and the experiences of other students that have come through the program, the importance of developing relationships with other new students of color was perceived as a key component of SDTI and an important component in receiving support. Faculty and staff members reflected on SDTI as a space to develop community; to make mistakes without being judged; to foster a secondary family that supports you in the summer and throughout your graduate program; to foster a sense of family with students from across many disciplines; and to enjoy a strong community that you can connect with after

students have graduated and moved on in their careers. Staff members Carlos, Elsa, and Alberto reflected on the mission of the program and discussed the ways community is developed in SDTI and how having a community can shield you from the many challenges new students face. As Carlos put it:

> [SDTI] is a community in the sense that...you're coming into a program where you don't know anyone, but you share something in common. All the students share one thing in common. That's being...new to graduate school but also underrepresented. Nonetheless, um, community is...you share that common bond of being first time in graduate school, as well as being underrepresented. Also, being supported by staff and instructors that aren't going to judge you. You know, I've been a part of many programs on the administrative side and the student side, and a lot of times you know people in the administrative positions can be very judgmental. You can easily feel bad, but in all my years you know being a participant in [SDTI] once and working for the program, you know it's a strong sense of community and support, uh, where students can be valued. Not be afraid to make mistakes. So, instantly it makes me feel about community.

Elsa shared a similar view:

> I just have, like, [a] really positive view; I think or I choose to see it as positive. I don't think that I would have been so successful here if it hadn't been for [SDTI]; um, I mean I got my apartment, I got everything set for my kids before coming here; um, the friends I have today are…from my [SDTI] co workers and I don't think many friends outside of that group are. I don't think I have many friends…that aren't from [SDTI]…. I just think that it's kind of like a family. I

> always feel as though you know this was something, this was a program and there were people in this program, who brought me in, um, and I'm eternally grateful for that and I always feel like, I think that is why I volunteered after, not because I felt like obligated to but I felt like you know this my responsibility in terms of like making, this space, as good as it can be, just like people made it for me.

The above demonstrates that as a new doctoral student, it can be challenging to show that you are learning: you may not understand the language, research methods, or even the learning environment. Nonetheless, participating in SDTI provides students with a community to help them learn and grow without fear of judgment, and offers a group of peers that can support one another. As a student with a family, Elsa was very grateful for her time in the program, and that ultimately led her to participate as a staff member, "paying it forward" and seeking to create a family atmosphere for other students.

Reflecting on past participation and the culture of community that develops in SDTI, Alberto agreed with Carlos and Elsa that building relationships with other students of color from across many disciplines is a significant benefit to participating in the program. Having relationships across disciplines fosters an outlet to discuss racial challenges that can, and in many cases do, exist on campus. Developing this community, which is perceived as a cornerstone of SDTI, also allows students who may otherwise not feel comfortable letting their guard down to build rapport with other students and enjoy supportive spaces free from feelings of threat (subconscious or otherwise). In his comments, Alberto noted that students from different disciplines interact with each other as a result of participating in SDTI and often build networks that last beyond graduate school.

> So we had Engineering, Biology, MD/PhD [students] interact[ing] with students in Sociology, Education, Social Science, and Humanities. The reason why we did that was because for the students in STEM, they may be the only Black or Latina in their grad program. And we want to make sure that they have a support group [so] that when they experience some racial microaggressions, they have colleagues from across the campus to support them through that time, and vice versa.

He went on to say that no matter how the high the academic credential of the student, there is always a sense of insecurity in a new place. While some students present and perform as if they know more than others, you soon realize they are as insecure about their place at MSU as everyone else, and need community support. Alberto emphasized that students of color are forced to have a shield up because they do not want to be perceived as insecure or "less than"; as a staff member he worked to facilitate a sense of family or "familia,": a group of people who love you regardless of your background or the challenges you have faced.

Developing a community that lasts long after graduation is important for doctoral students, as the relationships one builds during graduate school can turn into publishing or job opportunities. Willie, a faculty member, was very appreciate of the way the STDI program helped to connect students of color with each other and build a sustained—and sustaining—community. As with Carlos, Elsa, and Alberto, Willie believed that the value and mission of SDTI is to create a space where students can build community and support one another in formative relationships that last beyond the doctoral years.

> So you know I, one time, years ago, I spoke to a collection of black graduate students and I said: "You know, you should always take the time to acknowledge one another; so the last thing you want to do is to get to the end of this journey, be a rock star in terms of what you know, decide to throw a party, and nobody wants to come because you never took the time to say, 'Hello.'" You know? You passed the time of day just to be a normal human being with other people, and the importance of that is that sometimes that gesture of acknowledging another human being who's in your space...in this space, sharing it with you, sharing the journey, to some extent, that [acknowledgement] may be all they need to make the rest of their day work well.

This idea demonstrates the notion that the development of a peer community is a critical part of socialization. Peer to peer engagement and building community creates a pathway for information sharing and personal and academic support. Staff in SDTI perceived that community built in SDTI fostered information sharing with respect to academic milestones, research interests, and external responsibilities. To staff and faculty represented above, community as part of the mission of SDTI, is central to the doctoral experience, as well as success post-graduation. The "we" of graduate education that is reinforced in SDTI is the antithesis to what is often the socialization of the competitive "I" in academia.

Family or community was central in how faculty and staff discussed the mission of SDTI. It was clear from personal experience as former participants, or from their view point as faculty and staff, that having a group of supportive individuals is key for new doctoral students of color's retention and their coping with the challenges of being in

predominately white and sometimes hostile spaces. While not explicitly addressed on the SDTI website or in the program manual, thinking about the role of community and family among students of color is culturally relevant and sustaining for those who experience it, and important for the faculty and staff who engage with SDTI students.

In summary, the development of connections among students that build community was a critical part of the mission for faculty and staff in this study. They perceived SDTI as a place to make mistakes, to reduce the judgmental attitudes that can accompany graduate school, and foster a sense of community. Faculty and staff reflected on their time as students and the way relationships in and out of SDTI helped the road to degree completion to be less perilous. Staff identified the common bond of bring first-time graduate students and students of color as a conduit to develop networks across campus and foster supportive relationships among SDTI students. These perceptions were consistent with research that suggests creating collectivist networks with faculty, staff, and peers can protect against isolation and support and empower students of color (Carson, 2009; Dee and Daly, 2012; Guiffrida, et al., 2012; Museus and Jayakumar, 2012).

Conclusion of Chapter

In this chapter, I have illuminated how faculty and staff view SDTI and how they discussed the mission of the program. These perspectives directly impact how the program is carried out and how SDTI Fellows learn what it means to be a new doctoral student at MSU and a scholar in their field. Tensions can arise, especially between and among faculty and staff, between providing needed skills and supporting new students of

color. Personal experiences and unique perspectives of former program participants serve as a guide to how they navigate the particulars of the program as staff and faculty. Faculty and staff see SDTI as a conduit to pass on information, especially information that is often hidden, unwritten, and unspoken, such as preparing for life after the degree, communicating through email, and navigating difficult spaces as students of color with intersectional and marginalized identities.

Through it all, a critical outcome of SDTI seems to be the family and community that develops as a result of participation. It is this new community of scholars from across campus that acts as a support system for navigating academic and social challenges, as well as celebrating successes as students' progress and move on in their field. Many of the staff have experienced these same critical outcomes as former participants. It is through these multiple perceived missions, which include serving students from different institutional types, that faculty and staff develop and carry out the daily activities of the program.

CHAPTER 6:

IMPACT OF SDTI ON THE SOCIALIZATION TO AND THROUGH THE FIRST YEAR

SDTI takes place over the summer. The program was developed to assist students in acclimating to the university and to their new role as graduate students. Chapter 6 addresses the following question: "how do students perceive the impact of SDTI on their socialization to and through the first year of doctoral study?" This question has three subsidiary questions, including: how do members of the 2014 cohort describe their time as SDTI fellows? What do 2014 cohort members perceive the influence of SDTI to be on their acclimation to doctoral study? And, what is the perceived role of SDTI on the ability to navigate through the first year of doctoral study? These questions are critical in thinking about the values and beliefs that students hold when they enter an institution, and how those identities change, or remained fixed, in response to the knowledge gained through participation in the SDTI program. At the core of the socialization framework are the experiences related to the culture that establishes norms for a student new to a graduate program and institution.

Experiencing SDTI over the Summer

This section addresses how students describe their time over the summer. In relating their experiences, students described their interaction with socializing influences such as faculty, staff, and peers, and how they experienced these influences within the structure of the program. The three main components of SDTI were seminars; research with and support from a faculty advisor; and social events that provided an opportunity

for new students to experience various activities and venues that exist within and outside of the micro-urban area.

An important aspect of how participants described their time were the expectations that students held before participating in the program. Students' reported expectations of the program can be found in Appendix F. It was found that prior to beginning the program, most students expected that SDTI would be an intensive research program that would help them get used to campus, meet new people, and connect with faculty. Within this theme, three patterns will be discussed. First, during the summer component of the program, students interactions with faculty varied widely, and significant differences existed between the experiences of students enrolled in STEM fields and those in Social Sciences, Humanities, Education, and Business (SHEB) disciplines.

Second, there was a clear difference between students who appreciated the seminars offered by the program, even as they believed that the overall tone was negative and problem-oriented, with few to no solutions offered, and those who agreed with the seminar style and the stated concerns about the experiences of doctoral students. However, as both groups of students moved through the school year, they began to understand and value what was discussed during the seminars.

Third, in describing time with peers over the summer, there was an initial awkwardness in getting to know peers in the program over the summer; however, the summer offered an opportunity for students to build a support network. Living in the private residence hall versus a student's own summer accommodations influenced the extent to which they were able to develop strong social networks over the summer.

Overall, students did not have the "same experience" in SDTI: notable differences were evident in their discussion of the program. Each of the three patterns above are discussed in the following sections.

Connecting with faculty advisors. The relationship that develops between new doctoral students and faculty is a critical first introduction for the student to both the department and to the field. It is through faculty contact that students learn program expectations, how to conduct research, and how to network in the field. Not every student in this study discussed their relationship with their summer faculty mentor. Of those who did, a clear pattern emerged. Even though students expected to work in close contact with their summer faculty advisor, there were clear differences in the experiences of students in STEM fields versus students in SHEB disciplines. It is important to note that faculty in STEM fields tend to remain on campus in the summer, due to their labs, grant responsibilities, and contracts that run over the summer.

Chris, an African American male who returned to school after working in his field for over 15 years, thought that his advisor would be more "hands-on." Though he did not express disappointment about it, he was clearly aware that there was not as close of a relationship as he expected between the SDTI program and his home department. Monica, an African American female from the southern US, not only expected to receive greater attention during the summer, but actually expressed her feelings about this to her summer advisor. Monica described feeling like she was left "out to dry," and that feeling led to her belief that she might be abandoned or poorly mentored by her advisor during the academic year. Brian, an Asian American male, similarly talked about the negative feeling that arose from the absence of his advisor over the summer. Even during his

interview, a look of disappointment and melancholy came over his face, suggesting that this absence had impacted his experience. Erica, an African American female who came to MSU with her children, described being afraid of being rejected by her faculty advisor. She described him as "busy" and "important," and this perception influenced the ways in which she navigated the communication of her mentoring needs. The consistent message among all students was the unmet expectation regarding the amount of time advisors would dedicate to them over the summer.

In contrast to the experiences of students in the SHEB disciplines, students in STEM fields described faculty that were present, attuned to their needs as new doctoral students, and responsive to any concerns. Jerome, an African American male from the southern US who came directly from his undergraduate program to MSU, emphasized that his advisor took the summer to really get to know him, and that he considered her a great resource. Sherry, a Multi-racial female who also proceeded directly from undergraduate to graduate school, attending MSU for all her degrees, expressed several times that she preferred to communicate by email, and emailed her advisor often, every day. The manner in which her advisor responds, and how frequently, was very important to her. She described her summer experience with her advisor as relaxed, and made it a point to mention that her emails were always responded to in a timely manner. Christina, a Multi-racial student who also came to MSU directly from undergrad, described pursuing research in close contact with faculty, rotating projects every few weeks. This also included time with peers in her department as well, with a focus on becoming familiarized with various methods for the discipline. A comparison between SHEB and STEM student experiences with faculty over the summer can be found below in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1. Students' experience with faculty over the summer.

Student	Experience with Faculty Advisor over the summer
Chris SHEB	My expectations for [my department], I think, might have been more hands-on with SDTI, and I didn't feel that. But I didn't see it as necessarily a complaint. It was just, like, an observation; like, they weren't as hands on as I thought they might have been. It was more like they were kind of signing off on SDTI without being actively engaged in the whole SDTI experience.
Erica SHEB	I was terrified because my adviser is just an extremely busy person and you know straight out. What I realized is, and I knew that before I came here, so it had me always kind of feeling intimidated, is that our entire faculty is very important. So it kind of didn't matter who you got—they were busy. And, so, I wasn't sure how to balance the amount of kind of mentoring I might need, with their schedules. I just knew I didn't want to feel rejected, from the department. I was always scared of that feeling.
Monica SHEB	I kind of remember feeling like he kind of left me out to dry, because I moved out to [MSU] I think on the 6th of June and I think I was expecting a lot, like, contact with him, and [that] he would be very hands on with me; and, he had actually just taken his vacation around the time that I moved up here, so I was like, "Oh no!" and the first few weeks of [SDTI] our instructors were like, "Okay, you should be meeting with your mentors and you should be planning your projects." And I'm like, "I'm not doing any of that because he's not back and he's not in the country." So that was frustrating. So, I think I expected him to just be more hands on, and then when he finally got back I felt like he took offense with the fact that I was like emailing him all the time and he was like, "I don't know what you thought--'I'm just gonna not do my part, hold up my end of the deal?'" and I was like, "You haven't been communicative so how do I know that actually you were gonna mentor me when you got back or just abandon me?"
Sherry STEM	I worked with, um, my current adviser and they were, I would say pretty relaxed. He knew we had events and flexibility and, um, you know a lot of it, he's like "it's your discipline. You have to figure out how to discipline yourself, structure yourself"; and he's like, "I trust you, I know you can do it. If you have questions, come to me." And they're always very good about answering emails fast and if I had questions and making time as well.
Jerome STEM	Yeah, they had some data they had already collected that I used for that project and I kind of developed a research question and got the literature, and we did, like, some basic analysis and just kind of took the time to get to know one another and to get to start that, you know, help develop that good rapport; you know, like, ask questions too; she wanted that as a great resource for me to kind of go through [area where school is located] and so it's more of just trying to get an idea of where I can fit in and how she can help best serve me as an advisor. So, you know that's kind of what it was.

It is important to note that there are several colleges and departments within the SHEB disciplines in which faculty hold 9-month appointments, spanning August- May, and spend most summers engaged in their own scholarship or traveling. Even though the students' confessions suggest that there is something wrong with the advising styles, this study focused on students' description of their experience, which is still important. STEM students are more likely to be in a laboratory environment during the summer, where

there is a greater chance of connecting with department peers, faculty, and students, learning the ropes of the program and research. What is important to take away is that new students arrived on campus and in the department with a set of expectations regarding how they would interact and get to know faculty.

Interaction with faculty taught students about academic culture, departmental expectations, and suggested what their relationships might be like moving forward. This interaction was influenced by the background of the students, which included such factors as time between degrees and life experience. For example, the SHEB students interviewed above were all students who had come back to school after working full-time. It could be that coming back to school after an extended absence could lead to a need for greater attention as they re-acclimate to academic life. Jerome's advisor took time to get to know him and to introduce him to resources, while teaching him about current projects in the program. For Erica, lack of connection with a busy advisor ran the risk of communicating rejection, even if the faculty member did not mean to do so. Monica, alone of all the participants, exercised agency in communicating with her faculty advisor about how she felt. While this approach may not work for every student, expectations can be clarified if open dialogue between faculty and student exists. The faculty member in turn learned how Monica was feeling, which demonstrates that socialization is an interactive process, where each constituent has influence over the other.

Describing time in the seminars. It was through interaction with SDTI seminars that students began to develop a knowledge of graduate school culture, pursue professional development, and learn research writing strategies. Students described their time being in a seminar space in a negative tone, even though the effort was appreciated.

However, as students moved towards the school year, they did begin to understand and value what was discussed during the summer seminars. Roxanne, a student in the SHEB disciplines who started a PhD at another institution but decided to attend MSU after her advisor left to another school, discussed how the negative tone in the seminars made it difficult at times to be excited about attending. She described seminars as being "pointless at times," and believed that there should have been more conversation around the opportunity and navigation of difficulties. The full transcript is presented below for context.

> A: I'm tryna think. We all griped on the long walk to, uh, class every time. We were just like, "Ugh."
>
> Q: Was it because it was summer, 'cuz it took you a long time to walk?
>
> A: No, we didn't wanna go.
>
> Q: Oh, you just didn't want to go in general?
>
> A: Yea, some of the classes were…we found pointless at times…
>
> Q: What kinds of things did you find pointless? Can you give examples?
>
> A: Um, there was the emphasis on the negative aspects associated with the PhD, which if you come in with a deficit or negative perspective, the outcome will more than likely be negative going into it. So, um there wasn't a lot of talk about opportunity, and so that was one of the main things we did not like going into some of the…*one* of the classes. That was one thing we didn't want to discuss. It's like, "we're excited to be here; we know it's gonna be hard, help us navigate, don't tell us why so many people drop out and not encourage other pieces."

Similarly, Faith, a student who attended MSU for all her degrees, appreciated the ability to have dialogue with other students. However, she felt that the dour conversation about the campus would negatively influence a sense of belonging.

> What we, I think, started to feel was that there was a lot of, like, warnings about, like, how [MSU] is going to be … we are going to feel more isolated than we feel here. I mean, being, like, in a group of, like, 30-something students of color and it was, like, wait until summer is over, you might be the only one. And some of the people in engineering and, you know, other sciences so it was like you could technically be the only one, but I think some people were, like, a little frustrated with that. What I did like about it is that there was a lot of dialogue. People got a chance to really express, you know, how they feel and a lot of people took a stance, they were like, "you know, I came from being the only person, so this is not new to me"; but there was a lot of foregrounding in that class.

The narratives of Roxanne and Faith demonstrate that talking too much about the negative aspects of an institutional or department culture can leave new students disenchanted with the academic process. Roxanne felt like the tone was so negative that students had a hard time attending seminar. It was perceived that speaking from a deficit perspective did not encourage students to think differently; instead, it exhausted them.

For Faith, there seemed to be a lack of conversation in the seminars to reflect the vast and varied experiences of students of color. Not all students have a difficult time adjusting to their status as one of a few students of color. Language like what was expressed above could leave a student wondering whether they belong in this

environment. At the same time, Rowley (2014) suggests that conversation around the realities of race at a Primarily White Institution (PWI) is an essential part of racial socialization on campus. We should keep in mind that the challenges of graduate school expressed during seminar are the lived experiences of the staff that oversee the seminar, and serve as one of many stories that exist regarding the culture of PWI's. However, including suggestions on how to overcome such experiences are an important part of the discussion. Interestingly, the very same participants who expressed frustration with the warnings and negative conversation later dealt with experiences that were reflective of the warnings.

Negative conversations about racialized experiences on campus were not always appreciated; however, they became helpful during the first year. Of all things, what stuck with Adjua most felt at the time like a negative conversation. Descriptors such as "battlefield" and "warzone" made her feel like she was getting ready for a conflict, rather than for graduate school.

> Like, it's a battlefield, and you gotta go in there, um, [and] fight…um, it had like racial tones to it, but somehow I didn't really understand what they meant. Um, I knew what they meant, but you know you don't know until you experience it, you know? So it seemed like we talked a lot about the negative stuff, like the battlefield and the war zone, and these phrases. I mean they were talking to some of my colleagues there and we felt the same way.

As she transitioned into the fall semester, and throughout the year, Adjua experienced microaggressions in the classroom that recalled those summer seminar conversations. During those times, she appreciated the available support from program

peers. During her first year, Adjua described a professor who would make racist statements and facial expressions in class. The first time it happened, she wondered whether it was all in her imagination; however, the statements kept occurring. For example, Adjua recalled statements like " Black people don't believe in education"; or, "Black people don't have culture." After speaking with other Black classmates, she realized that she wasn't the only one that saw the course climate as hostile. Adjua also described a moment when she discussed the Black tax of reduced value in housing in class, and her knowledge was invalidated by the professor, who did not believe her. During the most difficult moments, she turned to peer connections in SDTI.

> So, if they hadn't mentioned it, maybe I would have felt like I was the only one feeling this or something like that or had nowhere to turn. Um, for those experiences, racial experiences. Um, I had, like I mentioned the social support group, because now what I got out of it a year later [was that] I rely on those social support groups that I met from [SDTI]. At first more than any other group.

Adjua continues to express her appreciation for those conversations in seminars. By her own admission, if she hadn't had those conversations, she would have felt like no one else had experienced microagressions, and that she had nowhere to turn to for support. Her ideas about the summer seminars changed as a result of the personal and academic experiences in her life over the school year.

Mary, a STEM student, also believed that the conversations during the summer seminars were negative and wished it could have come from a personal account and not a generalized one. She attended MSU for her Master's degree and had not experienced negative circumstances. However, in a different program during her PhD, circumstances

arose that made the seminar advice relevant. Mary described her department as cutthroat—one in which students are warned by faculty not to talk to other students; students are embarrassed by professors during presentations by being told "their project is ridiculous and they should stop talking"; and when students go to the Dean, they are told that there is nothing that can be done since the faculty member "is kind of a big deal and cannot be disciplined." Mary described a climate where many students have left the program, and on a floor in the building mostly comprised of graduate students, people don't talk, people don't smile, and there are lawsuits between labs for intellectual property rights. At the same time, Mary reported feeling an incongruence between her initial perception of the curriculum of the SDTI program and what she experienced in the first year.

> I think, some of the folks that taught the classes in [SDTI], had been scarred by some of the experiences that they had during their graduate study, so they … instead of sharing something and saying, "You know, this terrible experience happened to me," they made it sound … they would tell us things like, "Hey, you're going to have people … maybe everyone wouldn't want to be your friend," and just very, like, maybe everything is going to be bad attitude, and so that bothered me especially cause I had such a different experience with my Master's.

Now that Mary has left the university, several former classmates have come forward to speak with her and seek mutual support. I asked Mary how she felt about the advice given to her after the first year, given everything that she went through and her decision to leave the program:

> In May would have been two years for me, so I quit after a year and a half. But I understood the people that had such terrible experiences; I hadn't understood that, I hadn't been as open to that, or, like, understanding of that at first, but … I understood it but I still think a more neutral presentation would have been better… I think just really continuing to work on that balance and just more … not teaching certain things as this is how it is, or this is how it will be, but rather this is the diversity of the experiences, where I wish we had done even more of the practical stuff.

For Mary, the most valuable aspects of the seminars were the practical advice on the range of experiences, both good and bad, that a doctoral student may experience and the strategies offered to address such challenges. Mary experienced negative circumstances related to the curriculum of the program and her interaction with peers in her department. Questioning whether a doctorate was for her, due to several circumstances, led to her choosing to leave. In making that decision, Mary changed her perception of the value of having a PhD that she held prior to enrolling. In the end, she did not feel connected to the program or profession, and learned that her values did not align with the experience in the program.

For Adjua, even though she once perceived messages as negative, having conversations about the racial realities that can exist on predominantly white campuses not only provided a means to recognize racial instances, but they also provided an outlet in the form of peer support through the relationships she developed in the summer. Adjua decided to stay at MSU, but did transfer departments. Racial socialization has been shown to provide a buffer against some forms of racism that may be experienced in the

academic context (Rowley, 2014; Truong & Museus, 2012). While the staff explained that racial trauma is a real threat to the transition of doctoral students on these types of campuses, that message may not always be received in the intended way. Once Adjua experienced racially traumatic events, she could draw from what was shared over the summer.

Seminars served as socializing influences, and students adjusted to their environment based on the perceived importance of these influences on anticipated outcomes, such as graduation and racial/gendered experiences on campus. This may also impact how they interact with others as their doctoral student identity continues to develop.

Interacting with peers. In describing time with peers over the summer, students appreciated having a chance to get to know others in the program. In other words, the summer provided an opportunity to build support networks. Living in the private residence hall versus a student's own summer accommodations influenced the extent to which strong social networks developed over the summer, and the extent to which students gained additional knowledge about graduate education. Personal communities have a significant influence over the socialization experience. Two patterns of interacting with peers developed. First, developing community with peers provided another way for students to learn about the graduate experience, research methods, departmental practices, and provided a chance to discuss the overall shared experience of graduate school. Second, existing family relationships influenced the extent to which a student was able to develop an external community in SDTI and develop sense of belonging at MSU.

Monica, Joshua, Brian, Mary, and Christina all present different perspectives on getting to know peers. As they relate, living on or off campus influenced the speed and extent to which they built strong relationships over the summer. For example, Monica, who lived in the private residence hall provided by the program, described making friends easily over the summer, beginning at orientation. She appreciated meeting peers of different ages and backgrounds, and this only added to the richness of the experience.

> It was really nice to kind of see the diversity of research interest[s] but also life experience[s]… [P]eople were different ages, and I was kinda on the younger end, but it was nice to know we had, like, you know, people in their late 30s, and early and mid 40s, that could impart wisdom about certain things. It was fun. I'm still friends with my [SDTI] peers.

It was these differences, while appreciated, which also made getting to know people "awkward" or "tough" at times. An example of this was related by Joshua, an African American male from the SHEB disciplines, who hailed from a neighboring major city. He spoke about the difficulty of connecting with peers much younger than he, who also had strong ideological differences. Joshua came back to school after decades of teaching at 2 and 4-year institutions, and grew up in the city under the influence and mentorship of his father, who also taught at similar institutions, and other faculty who researched Black studies and made significant impacts during several social movements of the 60s, 70s, and 80s. He described that very early on he knew who he could share information with and who he couldn't.

> I was a fish out of water and I was dealing with folks who were twenty years my junior, who didn't have much experience and were jockeying for position. So, I

saw it very clearly. So, it's kind of tough sometimes. So, a lot of times I try to avoid social situations and being in the middle of things that are for much younger folks.

A younger student, Monica, appreciated the diversity of age differences; however, the same disparity made Joshua feel disconnected. This could be a result of Joshua's return to school after instructing community college students, or simply the nuances of being out of school for so long before returning. The term "jockeying" refers to the competitive nature of graduate school; what Joshua noticed is what staff member Alberto described in Chapter 5. In the beginning, students would want others to perceive that they knew more than they did, or that they didn't have any questions. In actuality, these same students *did* need the advice of others, and SDTI served as a place where students might eventually just be themselves. Joshua also lived in the privately owned residence hall; however, it was his age and life experiences that led to the awkwardness he felt in getting to know peers over the summer.

Living in the privately owned residence hall influenced the extent to which students perceived a strong connection over the summer. SDTI prefers that students to live on campus together, as a strategy to promote community. Nonetheless, circumstances arose that prevented some students from living on campus over the summer. Brian and Mary confessed that it was tough getting to know all of the peers in the cohort over the summer, not due to age but rather due to living off-campus. Christina shared that the unexpected information sharing occurred by sharing a living space promoted community. Even though Brian lived in his own, off-campus housing, he described himself as very social and took it upon himself to hang out in the private residence hall after program

hours, even though he did not live there. He mentioned that he had contracted housing prior to learning that program would provide it. In describing his time over the summer, what really stood out to him was that the discipline-specific groups people found themselves in, for example STEM, made it difficult to get to know people from other fields, at times.

> I think it's hard, because, you know, everybody kind of is there for the doctoral studies or master's studies so maybe they are not feeling too social; that was kind of awkward. People obviously broke out into groups, and you can't really force them to talk to each other.

Similarly, Mary, a STEM student, started her research in May prior to the beginning of the program, and lived in her own housing. She also acknowledged the impact of not living in the private residence in developing connections over the summer.

> I didn't live in [the private residence hall] and I think I would have gotten to know more people earlier on in the summer if I had. But, because I was already doing this program and doing the research, I was busy. I didn't have time to move in; whatever, I chose not to do it and so … But over time I got to know people.

Christina, a STEM student who did live in the provided private residence hall, talked about the ways in which she interacted with peers over the summer, particularly as it related to discussing ideas outside of her own research interests. What we learn from her is that engagement occurred after program hours, often late into the night. The silos that Brian perceived weren't necessarily barriers for Christina, as she was able to connect with students and have what she felt to be meaningful discussions across disciplines. In addition to sharing meals and engaging with others, shared housing also provided an

opportunity for her to connect to others in SDTI after seminar hours. Christina shared that when she got together with others at night, when her work was done, conversation often centered on the graduate school process and academic topics of mutual interest, such as disparities in education. She appreciated getting to know students from other disciplines as well as the social support that was developed over the summer.

> It was, really good to have, um, to, like, live in a dorm. I … I mean I was like, "I am never going to live in a dorm ever again," and when I got here I was like, "Oh!" You know, you recognize people, and you sit down to lunch with whoever is there, and you make connections. And that was really, you know, it was nice to feel like I had, you know, if I got lonely or bored, I could, like, walk down the hall and knock on somebody's door and that … that really helped, um, and everyone was feeling a little overwhelmed.

Through Christina's lens, one can see how gradual the socialization process was that took place in the living space. Living in the residence hall provided her with an opportunity to have small, intermittent conversations over meals with students that were going through the same journey. This seems to suggest that Christina valued connection among students, both to learn new things as well as to cope with the rigors of graduate school. Mary and Brian did not live on campus, and they demonstrated two different views on cohort engagement. Brian considered himself outgoing and made an intentional effort to connect with other students: he thrived on connection. Mary recognized that not living with others made it a bit more difficult to get to know others; however, she was more focused on research at the time. The need for greater connection only came during the school year. Overall, students who lived on campus in the residence hall with other

participants were more likely to experience connections and gain peer information during the summer. However, various nuances existed.

The second factor that mattered within the theme of interacting with peers was family as a way for finding personal connection and socializing in the program. Familial social support became very important for Oliver and Roberto, who came to MSU with partners. Family members, such as partners and children, are often considerations in graduate school, as there is no "typical graduate student." Additional responsibilities external to educational pursuits can influence the extent to which a student can engage with peers as well as the manner in which that engagement occurs.

Oliver, an African American male in the SHEB disciplines, came to MSU after working for a few years and leaving to attend graduate school at an institution in the Mid-Atlantic area of the United States. During the program, Oliver was engaged to be married, and his fiancée came with him. Both were making important transitions. As a student traveling with a family, he was able to bond with other peers in SDTI that also had spouses or partners. This provided an opportunity for their spouses to also develop new connections in the area and provide support to each other as well. As Oliver explained,

> She was a part of the transition for me too, 'cause then it became less about just me, this new doctoral student, but then I'm a doctoral student's fiancé. Get to know her, she's interesting, she has this own life, whatever. And that was critical too, was for other people who came with fiancés, or say, uh, like wives even, if you noticed it's like "Oh, you brought somebody who's not an academic or is not a doctoral student? What's that like? Like, let's talk about that." Which happened, and actually that maintained one of my strongest friendships from SDTI, uh,

> because now our wives now, because we both got married within the last year. Our wives are probably better friends than we are, at least in the sense that they get to spend more time with each other because we're doing doctoral things.

Peers are socializing influences, and, as previously mentioned by faculty and staff, encouraging students to develop community is important to the overall mission of the program. However, getting to know others is not always as easy as putting people into a room and expecting it to organically occur. Students came with their own backgrounds, experiences, values, and sometimes family that impacted the extent to which a bond developed right away. Even with all these factors, the opportunity to get to know others and develop networks was reported as important for all students.

Overall, when describing their time over the summer, even with different experiences with faculty, seminars, and peers, students appreciated the time spent in SDTI. Core experiences of institutional culture all work to form the complex process that is socialization. These experiences included academic programs and peer climate; an introduction to the university as a whole through program seminars; students' background characteristics; and personal communities, such as family. As students interacted with these various communities, and learned, they made decisions about how to move forward and what is important to remember as a new doctoral student. As they describe the program, students also talked about what they perceived to be the impact of SDTI on their understanding of what it meant to be a graduate student at MSU.

Impact of SDTI on the Acclimation to Doctoral Study

This next section answers the sub-question, "how do 2014 cohort members perceive the influence of SDTI on the acclimation to doctoral study?" Students did see

SDTI as helping to shape the development of who they are and, also, how they related to the cohort and larger campus during this very critical socialization period. Within this theme, three patterns will be discussed: the development of political and ideological identity; the evolution of one's own social identity; and, academic development through peer support. Within each pattern, students new to doctoral study shifted because of new knowledge, whether that shift was about academics or about themselves as a person. The interactions that they had with each other and with staff all influenced the intentional creation of new identities through personal understandings of the situations students found themselves in.

Development of political and ideological identity. For some, participating in SDTI presented an opportunity to learn more about who they were, challenging their thinking on certain issues and their beliefs about the world. Political and ideological identity refers to the ways in which an SDTI participant sees the world with respect to social identities and the experiences of citizens in the United States. While participating in SDTI research and through engaging with others, participants addressed the ways in which exposure to new ideas challenged them to learn new ways of thinking about the world, and how this helped their beliefs on sociopolitical issues to evolve. This is not to say that if students had not participated in SDTI that this evolution would not have occurred. Nevertheless, what this finding does suggest is that being part of a group of people who have different life experiences and thoughts had an impact on participants' growth and development. Even though participants mentioned this in different ways, Lamar and Angela present strong cases which serve as representative examples.

Lamar grew up and attended school in a small town in the mid-west, with a history deeply entrenched in slavery. He believed that his new political stance as someone who considered himself radical may have alienated others or actually kept him from being accepted into the program. He had never before had critical discussions of race or racism until participating in SDTI. He perceived that his participation in SDTI and the reading he did as a result of his participation helped to change his political ideology and identity, transforming him from someone who didn't think as much about societal issues to one identifying with the radical left, questioning systems of oppression.

> As far as what I thought about race and diversity and identity and stuff like that, so, well I think it's a different kind of report, because if I wrote about what I believe today … not sure that I would be so readily accepted into the program (laughs) you know what I am saying?

Lamar expressed that his beliefs changed and how he articulated his goals for graduate school and what he originally wanted to study is very different than what he now believed. Lamar believed that his position on the radical left may not have been accepted by those in power, as they may have been more likely to accept students who were more "docile." Lamar perceived that MSU, and SDTI in particular, might be more likely to choose students to participate in the program who do not question systems and who refrain from pusingh back on authority. I then asked him about what he believed contributed to this shift.

> Well, that was actually during the summer that I was in [SDTI]. Well, uh, you know, I was exposed. I read *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. I know that is a clichéd story, but, I mean, that was a big step in just moving to the left. And, you

> know, also just reading Karl Marx and just reading about capitalism just, you know, and then, you know, with just being in an environment like this where, I mean, because I am coming from [town in Midwest] … five minutes away from that city there was slavery, it's not like we were pro \-Black. I was exposed so much to different types of politics that I was never used to being exposed to on the left…And amazingly, that happened almost immediately when I was in [SDTI].

Lamar's story illustrates the relationship between background characteristics, the socialization process itself, and related outcomes. His role behavior between not being completely politically to the left and moving to the left as it related to his ideas and thoughts were shaped by the reading he had done and the individuals he surrounded himself with as a result of participating in the SDTI program. It was interacting and learning new knowledge that led him to change his ideology and politics.

Similarly, Angela, a Latina in STEM who is from the southeastern part of the United States, also talked about the ideological stance that she held when coming to graduate school and into SDTI. Angela demonstrated a transition from a more conservative religious stance, which was not spoken about as much in communities of color, to a greater understanding of others' experiences. In our interview, at times she seemed nervous sharing her thoughts with me. When she brought up the topic, she do so with the nervous, intermittent laughter that arose frequently as she shared. Angela described her neighborhood and secondary education as homogenous with very few African Americans or non-conservative community members. Disagreeing on topics in seminars related to issues of race allowed her to learn a different point of view from her

own. Angela, a student in STEM, considered herself to be a very religious person, even earning a second bachelor's degree in Theology. As a result of heated discussions during seminars and learning the positions of others, she began to shift her thinking and understanding of others. She appreciated the opportunity to be challenged in that way.

> I came in with a different sort of fear though, and see, one of the things I got worried about coming in wasn't so much ethnic background but rather ideological backgrounds. I came from a very conservative religious school and my beliefs tend to be more on that side. And I knew that if I put myself out there, I could easily alienate people. And when I did speak up sometimes, there was a little tension in the room so…I felt that they were respectful nonetheless. So, in that respect there was a little bit of hesitance on my part. But in other respects, I actually learned quite a bit from some their positions too, so, for example, I didn't know very much about the African American side of things. One thing I did learn was when I felt myself being uncomfortable about my positions. I wouldn't say that I have suffered the same way but that helps me to empathize a lot more with where they are coming from when I saw it happening to me. So, I really appreciated, I was glad to see that, to learn that.

Angela was initially uncomfortable expressing her unpopular opinions in seminars. This perspective became even more important as students with more conservative and unpopular opinions tend to stay quiet out of fear of being isolated. In a program for students of color, many have thoughts about the world that can be described as more liberal, regarding issues of race and racism in the country. Angela learned more when her positions about the world were challenged, and she questioned why she felt

uncomfortable when topics around race emerged. Angela demonstrates that students of color have a spectrum of beliefs, and it was perceived that in SDTI she could be brave in sharing and learn as a result of the openness of others.

Socialization was enacted in a way that when there was an openness to listen to others' points, students who would otherwise stay silent found bravery and connection with others. This is the essence of identity to doctoral students' learning and growth. Experience showed Angela that there could be, and was tension, related to her ideas around race. However, she chose to listen and learn from other students and staff, even while she advocated for her own opinions.

As we see in the cases of Lamar and Angela, SDTI provided a forum for students to learn more about themselves, especially for students coming from drastically different environments than the one they found within SDTI. This impacted their development as individuals and as scholars, and each was grateful for the impact that it made on their lives. This also demonstrates that socialization is complex, and that academic learning and commitment to the new role of graduate student and scholar is greatly impacted by demographic characteristics and background.

Development of one's own social identity and the social identities of others. One of the things I found interesting was how students perceived the social identity of their peers and their own social identity, and how participation in SDTI mediated the ways students developed in this area. Students in SDTI come from all walks of life, regions of the United States, and familial circumstances. A student's own background and experiences shapes the way they think about themselves and others. As students

interacted with each other and staff in the program, they began to form opinions on their self-identity and those of others.

For example, Roberto, a Latino male from an urban city in the same state as MSU, had very strong opinions about others in his cohort, and had particular feelings about students who also considered themselves to be Latin@. Roberto based his thoughts only on the phenotypic characteristics of some of his peers. His thought was that SDTI should weed out students who were "claiming" to be a student of color, but seemed to be taking advantage of the system. I bring up a particular quote not because SDTI had a direct impact on his thinking—a view he certainly held before participating in the program—but to demonstrate that even when you believe someone is "skirting" the system because of phenotypic characteristics, often they are also dealing with who they are and how others see them, sometimes more than their peers understand.

> I had an issue with people claiming to be Latinos and they're not. I noticed that many Latinos were not, you know, yeah. They look white to me with blue eyes. You claim to be Latino, but is it that you're truly a Latino, or is it that you claim to be Latino to get this benefit, right? So I think that's something that we can do a better job of weeding people out, maybe through an interview…at least have a strong sense of being Latino or anything that has to be a characteristic because you know, if you are fifth generation, detached from the Latino culture. You're already, like, so-called whitening up a little bit. I just think that's a little off for me.

Roberto assumed that if students were lighter or appeared white, that they were not really Latin@. In addition, if the way you "act" was not in line with what people

typically think of when they think of Latin@ then, again, you aren't really Latino and the program should "police" these students.

Roberto was himself operating from a position of stereotypes, which likely inhibited him from engaging with others who he perceived did not belong. What others think of you, how you think of yourself, and what that means as you navigate new spaces around yo, and a new academic life, are important to how students come to understand their new role as a graduate student. Angela, for example, was very fair-skinned and presented as white. She immigrated to the United States, and English is her second language. When asked what she perceived as the purpose of SDTI, she immediately brought up how she looked and what that meant in relation to the purpose of the program and how others saw her. Angela saw herself as a triple minority: a woman, an immigrant, and a Latina. SDTI impacted her socialization as a new doctoral student by helping her to think about who she was and what that meant as she began graduate school. SDTI provided her a sense of certainty about who she was to the point that her identity no longer bothered her, and how others saw her no longer bothered her the way it used to.

> And SDTI, even though it was geared more towards the underrepresented minority students…I have to be honest, people wouldn't notice very much if I were a minority. So, I'm Hispanic, but I don't look like what people would call "typical Hispanic," so that kind of put me in a weird sort of relationship with other…people because I always I had that little kind of nagging fear, you know, "Oh, she could pass for white." And, well, looks-wise I might not have got the same sort of treatment other people might have. There are certain things that immigrants have to go through regardless of what they look

like. But, also how I relate with other people who are very different from me and I think [SDTI] like really helped me navigate those sorts of things.

When the interview was almost complete, and I asked Angela if she had anything else to say about her time in SDTI that I didn't ask about, she began to reflect again on her identity and that she has spent her life dealing with these issues.

> It wasn't the first time I'd thought about it. I've actually been hit with it quite a bit growing up. I lived in an area that was largely populated by Hispanics [during childhood]. They would have never known that I was Hispanic, and when I went to youth group like everyone was Hispanic in my youth group. My church, my home church, was full of Puerto Ricans (laughs). I looked white. I mean, the reason why [SDTI] really helped is because it partly helped me deal with some of that. And it doesn't matter… I am as Hispanic as anyone else, so those sorts of things came up again, but in more healthy way and I felt more comfortable with my own skin. But it had always it had always been coming up at some point. Especially since I wasn't born in this country.

Other students faced social identity issues as they bumped against group steoreotypes. Some stereotypes were internally held by participants, which began to shift during participation in SDTI. Faith, an African American female in the SHEB disciplines, also discussed the impact that participating in SDTI had on embracing her own identity as what she called being a "Black PhD" student. What I find particularly interesting about this case is that Faith was a student who attended MSU for both her undergraduate and Master's degree. Neither was SDTI the first program for students of color that Faith had participated in. She was also in a similar program during her undergraduate years.

She then went and worked a few years in her field before returning to school; however, it was her time in SDTI that impacted her development related to the way she saw herself.

Faith talked about how she didn't want to be classified as a "Black student" but just a student. Once she participated in SDTI, and met students who were intelligent and diverse, she began to accept who she was. To Faith, prior to participation, programs like SDTI signaled that she might be lacking something, but she soon discovered that it was not true, and began to accept all of who she was, and now understood SDTI in a new way.

> I think it's hard because...I want to be myself as a human first. I didn't necessarily like the idea there were some special programs for, like, students that are not going to "cut it" and I think a lot of students of color may have known about it but didn't want to go through it, might have thought that… but I think that some of that is not understanding the diversity that exists among us, you know, once I got there and I saw … Some people came from the South, people came from the northeast it was good for me to see so much diversity among people of color it was just … it was a reminder of how different we are and how we are all individuals. And it kind of helped me to reconcile some of what I was feeling and wanting to be like … I just wanted to be a PhD student I don't want to be a "Black PhD student" and I think that I have come to the conclusion that it's not possible not because I don't want it to be possible. I can't walk around and be like, "I'm just like everyone else." Like, no, you're not! And they notice it.

Here we see Faith wrestling with her own racial identity: in particular, the perception that the program is geared toward students who need academic assistance. It is

important to note that since this was not Faith's first participation in a post-secondary program geared towards underrepresented students, this may have been an internal conceptualization based on previous experience. What can be seen is the juxtaposition of how the program is perceived and one's own racial identity formation. She then went on to say…

> So, [sigh], the acceptance of stuff like that and accepting who I am as a Black person and I feel like [SDTI] helped me to do that, to say that this is not something to be ashamed of. It's not a thing of, like, it's a penalty, or you weren't smart enough, or we know you are going to fail so we are putting you on this program. It is not that and so I think that accepting that it's something to be understood. It's a historically white institution, when you walk around that is how people will perceive you and there's nothing you can do about it and I feel like it helped me to, kind of, just be prepared for that. So, to encounter people like that, I know that that would not happen if I didn't look the way I look, you know? So, I am always a Black PhD student and I have come to accept that.

Faith's quote demonstrates multiple things. When students participate in programs such as SDTI, students may hold the belief that they are lacking something. Second, as students with multiple marginalized identities, being at a PWI, or as Faith calls it "historically white," is not always easy. What Faith learned as a result of participating in the SDTI program is to embrace who she is as a Black woman and to learn the lessons that the program aims to teach about maneuvering through graduate school and coping with the climate at MSU. The strengthening and acceptance of her identity as a Black

woman coincided with the accumulation of knowledge related to the identity norms of an institution she was familiar with but had come to understand in a new way.

For the students presented above, the development of self, and moving towards acceptance of who they were and what they believed was an unintended outcome of participation in SDTI, but is still in line with acclimating to a new environment and socialization to graduate study. The development of self, one's identity, and the realities of how that identity may be perceived on campus provided participants with a particular lens with which to make decisions on how they coped with the realities of daily life on campus. Learning and negotiating self and how one's identity impacts one's experience on campus is crucial to how students in SDTI navigate doctoral study and ultimately commit to the role of graduate student and professional in the field.

Development through academic support. Students perceived that over the summer, SDTI mediated academic development and support. Development occurred as a result of working with faculty, getting to know more about a potential research topic, and through help from peers. Students were very honest and open about the research and writing skills that were strengthened as a result of having the summer to dig into research or gain feedback from faculty, staff, and peers on their projects.

Students spent the summer, under the direction of faculty, working on current projects, or reading and thinking about where their own work might head in the future. During SDTI, students participated in research writing seminars, and those seminars combined with working with a faculty member provided the foundation that a lot of students needed to start the semester. Responses varied based on previous experience with research; however, the opportunity to start on research early was appreciated by all

participants. Demonstrated in the selected vignettes below are the nuances of the development of participants' connection to the role of graduate student as a result of receiving academic support over the summer and during the school year. In particular, these include dynamics between students and staff, or student to student, that contributed to academic role commitment.

For example, Donovan, a student in the SHEB disciplines, came to graduate school directly from his undergraduate experience. He was very open about the perceived impact that SDTI had on his preparation for graduate level work. In fact, he used the words "academic bootcamp" when describing the purpose of the program. Going from undergrad to grad school, he believed that the assigned research work over the summer was strenuous, but helped him to complete his own mission of going into the fall semester having a clearer idea on how to move through the research process. He perceives that his academic development was a result of the support he received in SDTI.

> So, to try to complete a research proposal or research project on a topic that you didn't have time for and, for two months, that was a big test but fortunately, like I said I had good direction going into it. So, it helped me ... it helped me actually just start the very thing I set along to do. So, looking at where I am at now, it's definitely a good move. Just once again, introducing me to the process, telling me, like, in terms of research. First and foremost, how to actually read an article, to break it down, to find out the information that you want from it without necessarily spending all of your time just diving at something that probably won't be helpful.

In addition to the writing seminars, and working with faculty, during out of class and research time, students also discussed receiving support from peers on academic areas such as writing. Similar to Donovan, Jerome also came directly to graduate school from college and is in the STEM disciplines. He was a McNair Program alumnus and credits that program with developing his interest in graduate school. Jerome considered his core group of SDTI friends his "fams," and he believed that they had supporting him socially and academically during the summer and beyond. He was very grateful to his peers who read his work and providing him substantive feedback that proved invaluable to his work moving forward. Peer learning supported his commitment to the role of graduate student through continued learning of expectations related to writing.

> With me, I'm the type of person that can really float around and be involved in any social circle and fit, you know. I gained really great friends during the program and there's like a handful that I stay in contact with, and that I wouldn't give up, cause they were really helpful like in terms of, not just having a social life, but in terms of support, in terms of help in areas you know that one wouldn't feel that they are at a really great level, like, with me. I know I need the help in writing like get some feedback, so I can call on one of my [SDTI] fams, that's what we call each other "[SDTI] fams," and they'd be like, "Yeah, I looked at it," and they'd give really great feedback and that was very instrumental to me.

Jerome's experience gaining academic support from his peers demonstrates that socialization to academic norms did not just occur from faculty and staff to student, but also between students. Socializing influences could come from anyone with the knowledge related to what one was learning. The students that participated in the

program had a variety of research and writing experiences. Jerome had the opportunity to gain feedback from his "SDTI fam," which also characterized the kind of relationship that he believed he had with his peers. He considered them his family and they had stepped up to help him when he needed it most. Lamar, a student in the SHEB disciplines, was pleasantly surprised at how much academic support for his research he received throughout the summer from staff noting that it exceeded his expectations.

> The staff of the [SDTI] program they would meet with us outside of class time and just go over our research and mark it up if need be, maybe telling you something that you needed to think about. You know that was very helpful … I guess I really didn't expect that from [SDTI] staff. So that that was definitely an exceeded expectation as far as, you know, the amount that they were really willing to help out.

In different ways, receiving support from various constituencies aided in the development of understanding academic norms of graduate school. Donovan, Jerome, and Lamar acknowledged that through academic support in SDTI, they were able to utilize new relationships with faculty, staff, and peers to strengthen and learn more about the writing and research process, taking one more step in becoming independent scholars and researchers. Learning through interaction occurred through working with others who took the time to assist, even if it was outside of the seminar schedule, to make sure students could develop knowledge they deemed useful for moving forward in their graduate school experience.

Tools that Last through the First Year and Beyond

A year later, participants discussed the perceived impact that participation in SDTI had on their first year of graduate study. This was easy for students to do, as they credited participation with mediating such things as confidence in one's academic abilities; having a community of peers to vent about the challenges of graduate school, as well as strategies to cope or deal with such challenges; and, finally, mediating the development of a "community" or "family" that sustains one well beyond the first year.

Development of confidence in abilities. It is not easy gaining acceptance into a graduate program. Often, departments have hundreds of applications for only a few spots. The students that are accepted have demonstrated through test scores, previous grades, writing samples, and work experience that they each have the potential to add to the field and become the next generation of scholars. Even so, students can come to school wondering if they have what it takes to matriculate, thrive, and add to scholarly conversation as men, women, parents, partners, and students of color coming from HBCU's or small Liberal Arts colleges.

Students credited participation in SDTI for helping them develop the confidence to say "yes I belong here" and to believe in what they could contribute to the academy. This connects back to Chapter Five and staff's understanding of SDTI as an opportunity to serve students from diverse institution types, as well as students who are capable and academically talented, but who would nonetheless benefit from a boost in confidence. What the following section will show are the nuances of this theme for students who come to graduate school directly from college, students who return after working full

time, and students from different institutional types that question themselves as future members of the academy.

Students who came directly to graduate school after undergrad discussed the visible difference in confidence in presenting and formulating research, and the unease of new students who started in the fall. Donovan, for example, did not feel as stressed in these areas as other new students, and the visible difference was clear. The learning that occurred in SDTI on developing a research topic, putting together a research presentation, and presenting it through the closing conference, provided participants with theor confidence and helped them to find a sense of belongingness in the academy. Donovan decided to embrace the role of graduate student presenter to the extent that even though he himself had a steep learning curve in the amount of writing that needed to be done, he was helpful to other students, further moving socialization forward through peer to peer interaction.

To further illustrate, Faith came back to graduate school after receiving her Master's and working full-time in her profession. Her confidence was developed as she discussed the value of the information she learned in SDTI. Faith came to the conclusion that she was just as capable of the work as anyone else, but it was gaining the capital or necessary information as a result of "who you know" that makes the difference. It is this new critical knowledge about graduate school that improved her first year.

> My transition would have been shocking, and what's so crazy about it is I went here. I'm like an [nick name for MSU] like two times over, and I still feel like I wasn't ready. I would have made it for sure. It would [have been] a lot more isolating. I would be a lot less prepared, because I had time off from school and

> [SDTI] helped me get back into that mind frame of what is going to be expected of me and if I were, like, to just jump back into that … without getting prepped or anything, I would be…coming up against people who are not necessarily smarter but who kind of have this cultural social capital that you may not possess.

Faith's story highlights a very critical goal and purpose of SDTI: the transmission of knowledge from those who have the "cultural capital" or "social capital" in this new space so that the journey can be a little less arduous. Students come to graduate school with everything they need to be a successful graduate student. However, additional information on how to maneuver through the system provides an extra boost, and it gave Faith the confidence to move through her first year, making her experience less isolating than it might have been had she not participated in SDTI.

Other students voiced similar appreciation for SDTI, including Oliver, who also came back to school after working full-time for a few years and then receiving his Master's Degree. As a student of color, it is not uncommon to internalize negative stereotypes about your own abilities and why "you made it" as far as you did (Taylor & Antony, 2000). Through participation, Oliver was able to combat those negative messages, and come to believe in his own abilities, therefore increasing his sense of belonging in the academy. Important to note is the role faculty had in encouraging a sense of belonging in the academy. As Oliver said, "[SDTI] was a major part of that, um, in helping me feel validated and like I belong here. Uh, and that it wasn't just like oh this is, you know the Black guy we're letting in. This is the qualified member of the future academy."

Oliver always had the skill, but institutional practices, such as positive messages from faculty and validation in his work, gave him the extra boost he needed to accept that his admission was not an accident. To further illustrate, Erica was a single mom and came through the Community College pipeline. Prior to receiving her Bachelor's degree, she received two Associates and worked in her field for ten years. After returning to school for her Bachelor's degree, she went straight through, participating in the McNair program, coming directly to MSU for her Master's and now her PhD. Erica internalized negative stereotypes of who was prepared and who was not based on the kind of institution you come from, which in her case was an HBCU. Even though she did not receive a lot of feedback on her writing, it was the program practice of awarding her scholarly efforts that really demonstrated to her that she was worthy of being here and developed her confidence moving through the first year. As she said, "I got a research writing award, and that contradicted the feeling that 'HBCU students aren't good enough.'" This confidence stayed with her as she moved through the first year of study.

The pattern illustrated by the above students' experiences suggests that institutional practices from the faculty and staff, such as a validating word, or from of the program, such as rewarding scholarly achievements, developed student confidence and helped to increase a sense of belonging for SDTI students. Students noticed the lessons they learned through workshops and presentations lasted well beyond the summer and had a positive impact on the first year.

Value of community in dealing with challenges. In thinking about the perceived impact of SDTI on the first year of graduate study, students articulated the value of having a group of people who can help work through challenges and understand the

struggles of graduate school. Students may not always keep in contact or develop strong bonds with everyone in the entire SDTI cohort; however, approximately 90% of participants discussed the value of having their group of SDTI friends who they considered their family and community. Descriptions such as "talking to students not in my department," "collaborate and strategize," or "they understand," were used to speak about the value of having a peer community to help one walk the journey and commit to the role of graduate student. Having a strong peer group and support network when challenges arose was described as the difference between choosing to stay and choosing to leave.

Christina, a student in STEM, brought up a point that was reiterated by many students. As the semester moves forward and time passes, one doesn't speak to everyone all the time; however, she knew that she had a core group of peers from SDTI that were not in her department that she had been able to build strong relationships with. This improved her sense of belonging to the greater MSU community. In addition, when she was going through a particularly tough time in the department dealing with some gender-based macroaggressions, she sought the opinions of trusted friends from SDTI. Christina considered herself to be in a male-dominated environment. During her first year, she described a climate of inappropriate comments in spite of required sexual harassment training for the department. She then explained that it was reported and as a result there was animosity among students, because not everyone believed that a report should have filed. As she states:

> There is sort of two main ways that I interact with people. I see people on campus or like at a coffee shop or something and that's nice to just, like, you know, feel

like, "Oh this feels a little bit more like my community because I know people who are outside my department"…it makes a big difference to have a support group that isn't in my department and a support group where I can feel like I can go talk about things that happen in the department and it's not going to get back to people, and I am not going to offend someone or piss off somebody's friend…we had some, like, some gender issues in my department the first year and my [SDTI] friends were really good at hearing me out about that in a less threatening way.

For Christina, talking over food, celebrating the survival of the first year with her SDTI community, and discussing departmental challenges with her SDTI peers helped sustain her through the first year. A similar value of SDTI was expressed by Faith, who during her interview commented that other students who had not participated in SDTI would often think that she had been friends with her SDTI friends for years, and not just over the summer. While she did not initially think that she would get anything out of program participation, she received academic support, gained increased confidence, and a community that helped her feel less isolated and assisted her in navigating challenges experienced during her first year. She also talked about getting together to celebrate the successes, but also the acknowledged the value of encouragement, assistance with challenges, and strategizing solutions.

I had support from others who were going through it in [SDTI] and we would talk all the time and people would be like, "Well, I'm taking this many hours, you know, I feel the same way, we can get together, we have to do this, you know?" So I think that's a lot of how I got through it was to have

people encouraging me, so, there was like, "I'm going through something," or, "My advisor is doing this …" so we could just collaborate and strategize together, so (laughs)…

Chris perceived SDTI as being very important, in particular for students of color. For Chris, support influences retention. Participating in SDTI, even if one left with only a few close friends, provided him with a support group, community, and a family to walk with along the journey.

I think [SDTI] is very, very necessary. I think it is important for people of color to bond in environments like this, especially if you have the opportunity prior to coming here. Once you get here, you are off and running. And if you feel like, it's either sink or swim, you got no support, then you might find yourself, you know, making choices to move on to a different type of environment.

Celebrating the successes, addressing the challenges of graduate school, and knowing one has a supportive network, can be the difference between sticking it out one more semester, and deciding that MSU or graduate school in general is not for the student. SDTI mediated the development of community that lasted well beyond the summer and past the first year of study.

Community that lasted and was sustained. Community doesn't always mean talking to each other every day, or going out every weekend. Graduate school is a lot of work, and during the year it is easy to get consumed in the daily rigors of graduate life. Developing connections that extended beyond academia was perceived as a way SDTI participants made a connection to MSU and embraced the doctoral journey. However, through participation in SDTI, students were able to develop friendships and support that

continued to enrich their academic and personal lives. It is this kind of sustained support that makes graduate school a little less arduous and that grows lasting relationships. I have spoken with SDTI cohort members after the interviews that are now writing book chapters together and presenting at conferences together. For example, Brian spoke about even planning weddings for other cohort members. SDTI provided a family that will last long after students graduate from MSU.

> So there's a larger peer group of friends that we always meet; from there, I'll pick one or two for studying, individually. You do that in large peer group, and that doesn't happen. We are hilarious, we don't study, and so we have to be kept separated, like two at a time, that's it, but we hang out every week, we go to each other's things, plan each other's weddings, and rely on each other's lives.

Roxanne, a student in the SHEB disciplines, mentioned that she brought the cohort back together to celebrate making it through the first year. She extends Brian's point of how participants valued the role they play in each other's lives in forming a community. The rigors of graduate school prevented many of them from getting together more often; however, she valued the way that they celebrated the moments that made their graduate school time special. For example, I coordinated a "post-summer… 'Welcome back'" event and a lot of people came over…. We celebrated, played basketball, took some pictures and like, 'Yay! Year one down!'"

Several participants noted that even though people were busy and they didn't get together as much, the community was still there, and they had access to people if they needed them. Lamar saw everyone at events and to him, it was like time never passed. During our interview, Lamar emphasized how SDTI members looked out for one another,

noting that my dissertation project was posted on the cohort's social media page, and that they enjoyed supporting those who came through the program: "Matter of fact there is a Facebook we've done you know we still post in, you still get in posts weekly and members of our [SDTI] cohort that are part of our group."

To further illustrate, Chris added a more nuanced and substantial example of the role SDTI had in connecting students who may have otherwise left the institution. Chris considered his SDTI community his family. Initially, he wasn't planning to come to SDTI. Chris wanted to spend the summer relaxing with his wife and baby and traveling. Nevertheless, he was very glad that he chose to participate. With unusual clarity, he described how his new community supported his entry into his program. In his words: "If I didn't have that experience, I definitely may have come in to that first semester in August really rough. Just not having people to talk to, people that you know, not knowing the lay of the land, not having that type of support."

Most participants, no matter how critical of program components, spoke highly of the network and community they built over the summer. Of all participants, only one student specifically mentioned the difficulty she had building the support system that she wanted. Erica, a SHEB student and single mother, wanted deeper connections with peers than she was able to enjoy over the summer. She had brought her children with her, and said "no" to many social events outside of SDTI programming. During the interview, Erica spoke highly of the program components overall; however, she stressed frustration with the overall lack of connection.

> And so the bonding that I...thought I might be able to develop or have some time to develop, it didn't. I was able to develop bonds, but it didn't go as deep as I

wanted, because there were just somethings I couldn't do, because I brought my children.

Erica's quote demonstrates disconfirming evidence that not every student believed they were able to foster strong relationships. Regardless of the amount of times students saw each other on the street, studied together, or shared information on social media, it was very clear that participation in SDTI helped them to build relationships that they held on to throughout their first year. SDTI was developed so that new students of color could acclimate to and thrive at MSU and graduate school at large. Understanding the ways in which the 2014 cohort described their time over the summer, and how they perceived the impact of the program on their journey to and through the first year, illuminated the institutional and programmatic practices that mediated their development as scholars. Furthermore, the strong agency of students to form relationships during and after program completion also helped to mediate development. Students have taken and continue to take ownership of their experience and building community.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I illuminated the ways that students described the impact of SDTI on their transition to and through the first year of study. Overall, students described their time over the summer in three components: differences in interactions with faculty, discussions of the racialized and negative aspects of graduate school in seminars, and getting to know peers over the summer which was influenced by whether students lived in the provided private residence hall.

Differences existed in the levels of faculty involvement with SHEB and STEM students. Students in the SHEB disciplines would have preferred greater interaction from

faculty. STEM students often rotated through labs or were on grants that were consistent throughout the summer. Many SHEB faculty were on 9-month appointments and focused on their own research or travel during this time, which could account for the perceived disparity in interaction. However, many students expressed seeing that interaction increased over the school year, through dialogue with faculty, or patiently waited for other students to graduate so that they could then gain more time with advisors.

When it came to seminars, students felt at times overwhelmed with the amount of negative information about graduate school that was often discussed. However, after experiencing instances of macroaggressions, or other challenges in their departments, students began to understand why staff wanted to communicate what they did. Getting to know peers over the summer at times was perceived as "awkward" or "tough" depending on one's discipline, age, or whether one lived on campus with the other students. Students who chose to live in the provided private residence hall did connect and use the time to get to know each other, socialize, and even discuss topics of mutual interest.

Thinking about the perceived impact of SDTI on the transition to graduate school, students perceived that SDTI had a significant impact on their own ideological development, growth, and acceptance of who they are as students of color. It was some of those very conversations in seminars and participation that exposed students to new and often disparate ways of thinking from their peers. This new information stretched them and allowed them to grow in unexpected ways.

SDTI is a program for students of color and, as such, there were instances in which every student might not agree on who was accepted and the definition of who was considered a student of color and who shouldn't have been. A student's views might be

different from how others saw themselves, or how the program defined who should participate. This speaks to issues related to race and colorism within communities of color on a macro scale. What was not realized is that this is on the minds of students who had to deal with acceptance and questions from others all of their lives; engagement in seminars helped students negotiate and reconcile some of those issues.

The development of academics through support from faculty, staff, and peers provided students with skills particular to doctoral studies, which represents socialization as the skills and abilities that one needs to make it through a doctoral degree program, develop as an independent researcher, and respond to any racialized (&/or gendered) issues as they do so.

Even with the ups and downs of the summer, SDTI students reported gaining additional self-confidence, finding the belief that they could "do graduate school," and realizing that they did belong in the space. The development of community had a lasting impression throughout the first year. Battling negative stereotypes about one's race, the institution one came from, or even one's own lack of confidence, students moved on to help other students. Institutional practices by faculty and staff helped students to feel connected and lessened the feeling of imposter syndrome. It was through participation in SDTI that students found a community of peers to address the challenges and struggles of graduate school and also celebrate the everyday successes of life. Even if students didn't keep in touch consistently, having a peer group to navigate and support during graduate school could make a difference in staying or leaving. That said, life circumstances can inhibit some students from building the kinds of sustaining relationships desired, which

communicates to SDTI the need to incorporate targeted initiatives that foster inclusiveness for all students.

CHAPTER 7:

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, FUTURE RESEARCH, AND CONCLUSIONS

In the findings chapters I have attempted to highlight the development of a long-standing summer program for new doctoral students of color and how students perceive the impact of that program to and through the first year of doctoral study. My goal was to examine an institutional practice through SDTI that seeks to acclimate doctoral students of color to graduate school and learn how this program communicated norms and expectations, thereby influencing their socialization. This study adds to the literature on doctoral student socialization as well as on support for doctoral students of color.

This study focuses on all aspects of the SDTI program, however, largely on the experiences of the 2014 cohort, who as of the time of data collection, had completed the first year of doctoral study. Literature on support for doctoral students of color tends to focus on fellowships and support enacted once the fall semester starts. Unfortunately, this means that the unique opportunities of institutional support that occurs over the summer has not gained much attention. By using methods of qualitative case study and focusing on only the 2014 cohort, this study captured the context of that year as well as experiences concerning SDTI's perceived impact on the first year of that cohort.

Most important are the particulars of the program, which include faculty and staff, and how students in the cohort perceived the impact of program particulars on their time at MSU. Very few studies focus on the summer initiatives for doctoral students of color and practices that may impact a positive institutional experience. There is not a general understanding of how programs like SDTI can make a difference to doctoral students that, in their own view, improves access within an institution. This study brings programs like

SDTI to the forefront of the conversation regarding socialization practices and support during doctoral study.

In this chapter I will summarize findings and group them into three key themes: the development and evolution of the SDTI program, how staff viewed and discussed the SDTI program, and students' perception of the impact of SDTI on their socialization to and through the first year. Then I will discuss the findings, implications of this work and future directions for research.

Summary of Findings

In chapter four I presented the context for the development of SDTI and the evolution of the program over time. The contexts of the institution and program are critical to understanding key components, institutional nuances, and why the program has thrived in this space for so long. I demonstrated that SDTI started as a result of both a need to address the challenges experienced by doctoral students of color at MSU and initiatives that existed at two other PWI's. I connected the formation of the program and changes over time to the factors that influenced these changes, then provided a look at how the 2014 summer was carried out given the differences in particulars from year to year. The understanding of how the program is run is important so that there is understanding of why faculty, staff, and students perceived the program the way that they did. Chapter four demonstrated that with the support of the graduate school, SDTI was provided funding for the program to help support the development of scholars of color, who were attracted to MSU from top institutions across the country. SDTI was used as both a recruitment and retention tool.

Competing interests on behalf of faculty, graduate school administrators, and

former student participants influenced evolution of the program. This in turn influenced at times yearly programmatic shifts, yielding different experiences for most cohorts of students. Findings suggest that even with these changes, key components of SDTI have remained the same: students spend 8-9 weeks on the campus of MSU engaged in seminars that focus on acclimation to the graduate school life and expectations, work with a faculty advisor, social events, living in a supplied private residence hall or living off campus, and a financial stipend for the summer. SDTI purposefully hires advanced graduate students to coordinate and support the program, which provides role models for new students and professionalization to advanced students and supports their growth in the field. For the 2014 cohort specifically, two new additions to the program occurred. One, the 2014 cohort was the first group to have separate weekly seminars focused on learning more about graduate school culture, developing further writing resources in both STEM and SHEB disciplines, and professional development separate from the undergraduate research group. Two, it was the first cohort to participate in the expanded version of yearlong mentoring which included both faculty mentoring and professional development workshops throughout the first year. This work did not go into the yearlong program in depth and thus is a particular topic that can be extended in future work.

How faculty and staff viewed SDTI and described its mission is the focus of chapter five. Findings suggest that there were clear differences between how faculty and staff discussed the mission and purpose of SDTI. Those who previously participated in SDTI as students, spoke about the program in relationship to their time in the program, and those who did not spoke about the program in terms very close to what was written on the website and in purpose statements--to acclimate new doctoral students of color to

graduate study. Findings also suggest that how staff and faculty viewed the program influenced the ways in which the program was carried out. Staff in particular took SDTI as an opportunity to implement practices that reflected this disconnection and chose to make information visible through passing on what is considered "hidden information" in graduate education, such as the importance of electronic communication and the influence of financial support on job trajectory. This study does not go deeper into the hidden curriculum of doctoral education beyond presenting the pieces of information staff chose to share that they could recall during the interview. However, findings do show that students viewed communication on the hidden curriculum in graduate education helpful in learning the ropes of graduate school and institutional climate. Findings also suggest that there is an emphasis on staff 's own experiences and moreover, on the potential tension inherent in the program between a program to help students assumed to need special help (not official purpose) versus a program to socialize students to university and graduate life.

Chapter six focused on how students described their time in SDTI over the summer and the perceived impact of SDTI on the socialization to and through the first year of study. First, prior to the summer students thought that interaction with faculty would be high, however findings suggest differential summer experiences between students in STEM and SHEB disciplines. Faculty in the SHEB disciplines tended to be on nine-month contracts and as such, spent time in the summer on their own research or travel. Unfortunately, this meant that students in these disciplines did not perceive high rates of interaction over the summer, nor communication around the expectation that there would be little interaction. Socialization is a process of mutual exchange and

findings show that not all students remained silent; students could exercise agency in communicating displeasure around the amount of contact that existed. Even when there were different expectations on behalf of faculty over the summer, students in this study still held the expectation that they would have an opportunity to get to know faculty and engage in practices that introduced them to the field at large. Previous work (Weidman, Twale, and Stein, 2001) suggests that commitment to the professional field occurs when students' previous ideal of interaction is congruent with the actual field. As such, it is important that faculty who know they may not be as engaged but choose to support SDTI students engage in pre-summer conversation around expectations.

Second, there were differences in student perceptions of the weekly SDTI seminars, which were how the program staff communicated the norms and expectations associated with graduate culture, academic writing, and professional development. Findings suggest that students believed the overall tone of seminars was negative; however, after the first semester began, many changed their view of lessons that were shared over the summer. For some, lessons became particularly salient when faced with racial or gender based microaggressions and other climate challenges during the school year. Even with lessons learned findings suggest that too much negative conversation around graduate school can leave new students disenchanted. Students also learned lessons from peers over the summer. Interacting with peers was described as initially awkward, however, over the summer students were able to get to know one another. Findings suggest that the extent to which students were able to form bonds was influenced by living arrangement. Students who lived off campus on their own reported getting to know others more after the summer was completed. Those who lived in the

provided private residence hall or who took the initiative to mingle in the residence halls perceived a closer relationship over the summer.

In thinking about the perceived impact of SDTI on the socialization to doctoral study, students perceived that there was an increase in political and ideological identity, thinking about both personal and academic support. Participation in SDTI provided an opportunity for students to have conversation with staff and peers around topics that challenged ideas about what they believed or who they were. For example, Lamar, through readings in seminar and research he acquired in SDTI, moved to a more liberal and radical political ideology. These interactive sessions challenged and allowed students to reflect on who they were and what it meant in relationship to the group and to the campus at large.

In addition, academic support was also encouraged through support from faculty, staff, and peers. Support came in the form of challenging SDTI students to grow strengths in research as well as through peer writing feedback. As students thought over the past year and how they perceived the impact that participation had on the first year of doctoral study, three subthemes were noted. Students perceived that participation in SDTI helped foster confidence in abilities through institutional practices such as academic recognition and faculty members' belief in abilities. Having a group of peers who understood the journey went a long way in overcoming the difficulties of graduate school as well as celebrating success. Students in SDTI discussed how important it was to have peers who understood the perilous journey and having that support could be the difference between leaving and staying. Even those who may not have developed a strong community appreciated the academic support and opportunity to acclimate to the campus before the

fall semester.

Discussion of Findings

Developed in 1999, SDTI has dedicated itself to supporting doctoral students of color, through carrying out a program that aims to socialize students to the culture of graduate school, MSU, and their individual professions. Socialization is "a product of gradual accumulation of experiences of certain people, particularly those with whom we stand in primary relations, and significant others who are actually involved in the cultivation of abilities, values, and outlook (Manis & Meltzer, p.168 as cited in Weidman, Twale, & Stein, 2001). In addition, Stein and Weidman (1989) argue that it is important to look at the dynamic nature of socialization from individual and institutional levels and to acknowledge the impact individuals have on the process and related outcomes. Students that participated in SDTI spend the summer in a variety of experiences, such as seminars, research with faculty, and time with peers and advanced graduate students. The time, advice, and experiences all influence the extent to which a student is "socialized" or commits to the eventual outcome, which is identifying with the role of graduate student, and with aspiring members of their professional field.

Socialization during doctoral study remains an important topic of study, as the attrition rate of the first year is approximately 40% in graduate education (Gardner, 2009). Utilizing the *Weidman, Twale, and Stein Graduate Student Socialization Framework* allowed me to examine institutional practices that influence the socialization of new graduate students to norms and expectations of graduate education. Furthermore, it provided a lens with which to think about the ways in which SDTI and specifically the particulars of the program, communicated the normative expectations of graduate study.

The examination of summer programs for new doctoral students of color at PWI's is deficient in the literature. This study expanded my understanding of the institutional practices and socialization strategies of an initiative that seeks to support new graduate students of color, while also thinking about the context and development of the program over time.

The Graduate Student Socialization framework allowed me to provide unique insights into the practices that improve pathways for students of color by challenging leaders to move beyond rhetoric to action through involving the entire community in the work of infusing equity by addressing barriers related to race/ethnicity. Graduate populations tend to be small and a student of color may be one of a few or the only student of color in an academic program (Tapia & Johnson, 2009). While socialization helped to reveal the complex dynamics of the doctoral degree process and what values students come to understand as a result of participating in the program, there were still gaps that this framework didn't fill.

Scholars have questioned the use of the graduate student socialization framework, questioning whether it is solely adequate to study the socialization of students of color due to the lack of consideration of challenges related to multiple marginalized identities that exist for this population of student (Rowley, 2014). Furthermore, a major criticism of traditional socialization practices is that they strip cultural identity from doctoral students of color while attempting to have them conform to longstanding institutional ideals and standards rooted in the institution's white identity (Gonzalez, 2006, October). The result can leave students of color vulnerable to feelings of isolation. Understanding the need to critically examine the role of race in socialization, scholars have called for a

reconceptualization of socialization, one that honors processes and is culturally relevant for diverse student populations (Cheatham & Phelps, 1995; Gonzalez, 2005; Johnson, et.al, 2010; Simpson, 2008; Taylor & Antony, 2000). SDTI program staff spent a great deal of time through seminars, communicating to students the institutional and graduate school culture that they felt would best help support acclimation to this new environment. The Graduate Student Socialization Framework takes into account academic programs and peer climate as factors that make up institutional culture and influences how students come to understand the norms, values, and expectations of graduate study. What is not included are programs such as SDTI as purveyors and transmitters of knowledge. This dissertation is specifically centered on how students perceive this factor of institutional culture and its impact on the summer and first year. Findings suggest that programs like SDTI make a considerable difference in how students come to a decision regarding acceptance and commitment to professional and doctoral student identity.

Rowley's (2014) Socialization Framework for African American Doctoral Students was developed from the premise that the manner with which a person makes progress is only partly due to academic ability and intellectual proficiency. Every organization has a culture and related social norms. Rowley (2014) argues that it is important to involve students in racial socialization prior to entering graduate school. The history of racism and racialized interactions is a challenge for many students of color at Predominantly White Institutions (PWI's) and this frame takes into account the unique cultural and social background for different groups of students. The key is to understand the ongoing reality of race in America and that the social lives of students of color are different from White students, whether or not a student has experienced overt forms of

racism (Rowley, 2014). He argues, “There is often cultural incongruence or cultural dissonance between students and the departments and universities they are studying in” (p.158).

Rowley’s Socialization Framework for African American Doctoral Students was created to understand the role of race and socialization but its components are applicable to all students of color. Even still, this framework is limited to issues of race/ethnicity and further work should incorporate an “intersectional framework” in order to critically examine the multiple marginalized identities with which students may come to graduate school. Findings in this work suggest that students develop new identities during the summer and through the first year.

For the students in this study, concerns around negative conversation about race and the graduate student experience overshadowed the experience at times. It was only after the first semester and year that some students began to understand the conversation and warnings that they received in class. This shows that even with the best intention on the part of staff and the intentionality with which staff included racial socialization within the curriculum, dissonance can still occur and students come to their own conclusions about negotiating issues of race in predominantly white spaces.

Further, even though the staff discussed challenges as they centered on issues of race students were negotiating intersecting identities, both marginalized social identities and political identities. For example, Lamar, developed a more radical identity as a result of the readings he encountered conducting research. Identities do not stop, and renegotiation with an environment occurs throughout the lifespan. Understanding this, SDTI should consider ways to incorporate conversation about the multiple and

intersectional identities within communities of color, and provide spaces for participants to have dialogue and share experiences with one another. Questions remain about the ways identity and commitment to a field occurs for students of color throughout the graduate pipeline.

What this evidence suggests is that the notion of identity development and resolution is more fluid than traditional theories assert. Even Chickering and Reisser (1993), who expanded on the notions of identity development resolution through the seven vectors, conducted research on undergraduate not graduate students. Through conversations and interactions in SDTI, students who may have already moved through stages when younger find themselves in conflict and developing a sense of self. For example, Faith, came to understand herself as a Black PhD student, not just a PhD student and her identity of self. The outcome of conflict resolution of one's identity has implications for the ways in which adjustment occurs and level of interaction with others in a new space. This all impacts and influences a student's socialization experience. Future work should dig deeper into the ways in which new graduate students of color negotiate identity formation as they make decisions about the new roles they are about to undertake.

This dissertation purposefully does not use the term bridge or remedial. SDTI could be considered a bridge program, since it does provide a "bridge" between life and graduate study. However, the deficit thinking associated with the term warrants use of a different term. This idea came in conflict at times when staff discussed the need for new doctoral students to become prepared. However, notions of preparation came in a different form than high school to undergraduate understandings. Graduate programs

offer admission to students who they feel have demonstrated the capability to thrive in graduate school. The faculty in this study saw SDTI as an initiative that attracted the best and brightest and often used participation as way to attract high achieving students of color from the nation's top universities. This means that the acclimation that is warranted has less to do with academic ability and more with graduate school culture and implementing institutional practices that communicate a student is welcomed in this environment. Since socialization is centered on whiteness and requires change from what students assumed when they first arrived, those who arrive from underserved communities may feel disconnected from its expectations and instruction (Weidman, Twale, & Stein, 2001). This was manifested, for example, by Mary, who decided to leave her program after the first year. Even though she assumed there would be collegiality in her department based on her Masters experience, she experienced high competition, backstabbing, and racial microaggressions. Participation in SDTI fostered a sense of belonging and mediated the eradication of imposter syndrome for many of the participants in this study, and it was perceived that particular institutional practices such as awards and verbal acknowledgement made the difference. Most notably, Oliver, as an example, reported that the moment he truly believed that he was welcomed and belonged at MSU was when his faculty advisor gave him a "nod" and verbally acknowledged the great work he accomplished over the summer. It was this pivotal moment among others that communicated that his admission to graduate school was no fluke that he was meant to be at MSU and thrive, connecting Oliver to his program and larger, his profession.

Programmatic choices that are made throughout the summer were influenced by a variety of factors. Faculty, most notably, have influenced programmatic components such

as time of the day that seminars are held to type of deliverable. Various faculties' idea of what it means to be ready for graduate level work has shaped and will continue to shape the ways SDTI carries out the particulars of the academic components of the program. The student participants were one of the most interesting influencers of programmatic change. Each year, at the end of the program, students provide feedback on what they thought worked well, and what they would have liked to see happen differently. The following year's cohort can perceive feedback, while useful, differently garnering new feedback each year. Influences on feedback have shaped how the program has changed over time. As such, the programmatic experience of no two cohorts has been the same over time and each alumnus SDTI's experience can be perceived differently. As changes have occurred over time, what the study showed is that faculty who participated over several years might not be as familiar with how the program had evolved or the purpose behind such evolution. As such, a more concerted effort in communicating yearly developments may be warranted so that there is a shared understanding of yearly components.

What is interesting is that the things that faculty, staff, and students had in common related to how they discussed the program. Community was a thread that came up several times in both faculty and student interviews. Program staff in particular underscored the importance of community within the program and fostering a collective community among cohort members. For staff, part of how they described the mission of the program rested in bringing students together from many different disciplines and intentionally creating events that provided an opportunity for students to get to know one another and develop relationships. Contrary to a more western, individualistic culture,

fostering a collectivist culture creates a sense of interdependence, group togetherness and emotional attachment that have long been observed among communities of color (Guiffrida, Kiyama, Waterman, & Museus, 2012). Findings demonstrated that thoughts of community as perceived by staff were congruent to student perceptions. Students perceived that through participation in SDTI, they developed relationships with peers that provided support in the challenging moments as well as support to celebrate the successes. Over and over, "family" was used to describe the relationships that students have to one another and it's their SDTI family that has allowed them to thrive and move forward in their doctoral journey. All participants did not develop a family per se, however, all acknowledged the important role of SDTI peer support in acclimating to MSU and helping them to feel like they belonged in this space.

This study was unable to provide perceptions of SDTI cohorts over time. As mentioned previously, this study centered on the experiences and perceptions of the cohort that most recently completed the first year of doctoral study. Due to the program's complexity, this study was also unable to present every finding that came out of interviews with participants that underscored the perceived impact of their SDTI experience. The design of the study impacted responses as students were asked to recall memories which at times were over a year old, and often students had difficulty recalling daily details of their summer experience and would often speak of things in aggregate. Still, information about program particulars and perceived impact were gathered and those responses add to the literature and knowledge of doctoral student socialization. The protocol was designed to gather student perceptions as they related to the acclimation and socialization to doctoral study, thinking about all factors that contribute to socialization

and students' commitment to the role of graduate student and member of the professional field. By focusing on their experiences in SDTI and the context with which the program rests, this work was able to contribute to the ongoing conversation around institutional practices that seek to support new doctoral students of color. SDTI as an institutional agent is a purveyor of knowledge and transmits information that influenced student's socialization during the summer. Future work should consider how other institutional agents such as SDTI add to the socialization of doctoral students and foster thriving and success.

Implications

While this is not an evaluation, findings could provide insight into perceived impact of SDTI on socialization to doctoral study. Even with its challenges, students still find that the program helps prepare them for the first year of study. Implications for the program, institution, and field are offered for moving forward in how doctoral students of color at PWI's are supported.

Summer program components change from year to year based on feedback from all stakeholders. It makes tracking program impact outside of graduation rates difficult. Consideration should be given to keeping program components similar from year to year in order to compare perceptions from year to year. Documenting and providing empirical work on programmatic efforts provides evidence of impact. However, it is important for SDTI to make a clear decision on how it measures success. These decisions have impact on how outcomes are reported to the graduate college and ultimately university, especially as fiscal budgets shrink. Decisions should be made on whether it will be first

year attrition or graduation rates. It may be a bit unfair for the program to measure itself against graduation rates as after the first year it has significantly decreased interaction with students. Further, there are many other influences on students' choice to depart such as curriculum incongruence or departmental climate, circumstances outside of SDTI's control. This does not mean that SDTI has no influence on success or graduation. Awards ceremonies and opportunities to present research remained programmatic practices that were perceived as influencing the decrease of imposter syndrome and increase of self-efficacy among students and SDTI should continue to find opportunities to incorporate positive reinforcement over the summer.

When trying to warn students of what can happen during the doctoral degree, especially in spaces that may be racially hostile, SDTI can incorporate readings that focus on the positive aspects of graduate school and provide concrete action steps for students who do find themselves in challenging situations. Discussion in seminars should also include academic program and curricular expectations, and discussions about "recommended practices" for students who find themselves making the choice to switch departments or completely leave the program. Even when participants disagreed with seminars, or other programmatic aspects of SDTI, it was the development of a strong community that had had the enduring impact over the first year. In addition, the opportunity to get acclimated to a new environment was appreciated. Program follow-through after the first year is warranted. Since SDTI is primarily a summer initiative, there is high engagement in the beginning and then it lessons as the years continue. Finding ways beyond the first year to engage SDTI alumni is warranted. Writing workshops, dissertation grants, student-to-student mentorship are just a few suggestions

to move the program forward, maintain student connections, and to expand existing impact.

It is clear based on the findings from this study that this program was perceived to have value for those who participated. Continued commitment to equity efforts on behalf of the institution is warranted even in the midst of difficult fiscal times. Doctoral students of color need the same things as other graduate students acclimating to graduate school; however, additional challenges with marginalized identities adds an additional layer at PWI's. Continued funding from the graduate college signals that there is a commitment to the eradication of historical barriers to an equitable educational experience and supports the development of a positive campus experience. Consider this action beyond the rhetoric of a yearly verbal commitment to inclusiveness, and consistent actions that can be and are read by some as ignorance in the face of a hostile campus climate.

In addition to action-oriented commitment through the allocation of fiscal resources, findings suggest that faculty engagement is a very important component of the SDTI experience. Institutions should consider additional summer funding for faculty who work with SDTI students. This can take the form of research dollars or a percentage of salary that can be used to get students off to a good start in the summer. This may improve equitable experiences for faculty who do not have summer appointments or funding streams. Faculty in turn should have conversations with their SDTI students before the summer begins to communicate expectations, regardless of whether a faculty member is on campus, or away from campus for the summer.

This study sought to increase our understanding in the field of how students

perceive a summer program and how the program communicates norms and expectations of graduate study. There is a paucity of research in this area. Understanding the possibility of what could be and adopting similar efforts based on the contextual nuances of the institution could be the next step of support in doctoral education. Findings of this study suggest that doctoral students thrive in collectivist spaces that value developing community as a way of coping with challenges, communicating rules and expectations of graduate study, and negative experiences with campus climate. Practice in graduate education should include infusing collectivist practices in doctoral education that allow students to get to know each other from across the entire university.

As previously mentioned graduate student socialization theory does not take into account the multiple and overlapping identities of students. Intersecting identities influence the ways in which students negotiate new spaces and interact with each other. Furthermore, this framework does not consider programs like SDTI a part of institutional culture. Thus, there should be an update for the framework that takes into account summer initiatives as well as other facets of institutional culture such as overall racial climate and orientation initiatives. Concomitantly, future studies should consider socio-economic status when studying how students of color acclimate and find connection in doctoral study. The ability to pay influenced whether or not some student participants could attend social events that were outside of SDTI. Students who could not socialize outside of SDTI functions did not believe that they developed as close of a community during the summer, therefore possibly inhibiting informal peer-to-peer learning. Even though outside of the scope of this dissertation, future work should examine socioeconomic status as a barrier to the integration and connection of doctoral students of

color within the university and department. Previous work (Congleton, 2013) suggests finances are a barrier and concern for many doctoral students of color, and is a topic that warrants further exploration.

Limitations

All research has its limitations, and this work is no exception. Qualitative research is more focused on depth than breath and therefore is limited by its design. This study examines how students in one cohort experience SDTI at one point in time. Interviewing all former program participants would have extended the body of this work and assisted in understanding on a broader level how students conceptualize the program and the role of the program in the acclimation to doctoral study. However, time and lack of human capital prevented this from occurring so it was important to bind this study to one cohort. Since I seek to understand the experience of the most recent cohort who completed their first year, which was in 2014, I do not have the ability to go back in time to observe students participating in SDTI. Observing events that occurred in SDTI would have provided a lens to understand the context and the ways in which the summer program is carried out on a daily basis.

This study required that participants reflect on the summer and first year of doctoral study. Recollection of previous experiences and events may not accurately reflect what happened during the summer or over the years for faculty, and graduate administrators. Quality was limited to the ability of participants to remember events as they occurred at that time. Participants were required to think back to discuss how they experienced a program at one point in time and their experience may not reflect the

experiences of students who participated in other cohort years, staff, or faculty that were not interviewed for this study.

Future Research

This case study answered questions about the development of an acclimation program for doctoral students of color, the ways in which faculty and staff view the program and ultimately how students perceive the impact of the program to and through the first year of doctoral study. The findings provided answers to: What are the historical and contextual factors that led to the development of SDTI? How do faculty, graduate administrators, and SDTI staff view SDTI? What is the influence of SDTI on the socialization to and through the first-year of doctoral study? Despite the findings questions still remain about how faculty view the program and differences among disciplines as well as influences outside of interaction with faculty and programmatic components that influenced students' socialization experiences.

We continue to have a lack of understanding about how faculty in different disciplines view SDTI. The faculty that were interviewed for this work were primarily from SHEB disciplines and there were only three faculty participants in total. This study discussed the views of a few faculty and staff members in aggregate, since there were not enough faculty participants for a meaningful comparison. Future work should explore in greater detail how faculty who have worked with SDTI over the years view the program, gaining a larger amount of volunteers. Specifically work should also seek to elucidate if the ways faculty view SDTI influence how they view and work with new doctoral students of color that have participated. How faculty interact with students influences experiences with climate and role commitment. This study also did not look at how

faculty and staff work together in carrying out the program particulars. The lack of faculty interaction for some students in this study suggests there is room for further understanding of how SDTI can connect with faculty and of how faculty come to learn about the program as well as their motivation for participation. This is especially critical as SDTI continues to develop new partnerships with STEM departments through grant awards.

Questions also remain regarding the role of outside influences on the experiences of students in SDTI. This dissertation did not explore the role of biological family during doctoral study. Weidman, Twale, and Stein's (2006) model incorporates personal communities such as biological family and external friends who also influence role commitment to the field and to the graduate school environment. Influence from biological family can take the form of displeasure with a student leaving home or a student sending money home to family, which influences finances while in school. Future work should include familial influences on the extent to which students find connection with a department and field as well as how students perceive their time in SDTI over the summer. Previous research (McCallum, 2012) suggests that familial relationships influence students, especially black males, to ignore negative stereotypes of success and overcome barriers. What kinds of familial experiences impact a positive or negative SDTI experience and the extent to which students find connection to the discipline and institution?

This dissertation examined how students come to understand the expectations and values of doctoral education as a result of participation in one summer program. What is known is that simultaneously students also transition from one phase of life to a new

phase. Future work can use transition theories as a lens to examine SDTI students' experiences. Theories such as Schlossberg's (Anderson, Goodman, and Schlossberg, 2012) transition theory can assist in framing influences of transition and the ability of students' to manage the transition to doctoral study. The four S's in this framework are situation, self, support, and strategies. SDTI can be considered the support anchor of the four S's in this framework. Transition theory can offer extended understanding of the way in which students cope with one of life most substantial and challenging transitions, doctoral education. Future work can examine the other three S's in students of color lived experiences with transition to doctoral study.

Lastly, this was a case study of one summer program and provided a snapshot of all constituents involved in the summer programmatic component of SDTI. However, further research should examine the role of SDTI mentoring on the first year of doctoral study for SDTI participants. This could also lend itself to quantitative work as well. What is the relationship between participation in SDTI mentoring and completion of the first year? Providing a deeper examination of all three components of this study is warranted. SDTI has existed since 1999, yet only the 2014 cohort participated in this work. What is the enduring legacy of SDTI as perceived by former participants from all years? What do students perceive as the facet of SDTI that has stayed with them throughout the degree to the workforce? Bounding studies to include all former participants may increase our understanding of the true impact of SDTI along the entire doctoral pipeline.

Conclusions

This study has provided empirical evidence of the importance of support in the socialization to and through the first year of study for doctoral students of color. Results suggest that students who participated in SDTI came to understand the values and expectations of graduate study through a series of programmatic seminars geared towards acclimating new students to the expectations of doctoral study as well as research with a faculty advisor. Faculty and staff view SDTI as an opportunity to serve students who are coming from different institutional types and an opportunity to instill a sense of confidence. Furthermore, staff used previous experiences in graduate school and in the program to communicate the hidden expectations of graduate school and foster community among SDTI cohort members; in this way they also contributed to students' social learning about program norms over time . Additionally, findings indicate that students perceived that participation in SDTI helped them to learn more about their own identity, to mitigate negative stereotypes about belonging, and to gain access to a community of peers that continued to support one another throughout graduate school. Students also shaped the evolution of the program over the years, again, reinforcing the two-way nature of socialization.

Even with its limitations, the graduate student socialization framework is still useful to examine the ways SDTI engages students and communicates the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to thrive in graduate school and the profession at large. Furthermore, the framework provides a way to examine how students also in turn impact the program, the staff that work with them, and the everyday particulars of how the program is carried out. I provided one theoretical framework that broadened our

understanding of the ways in which students learn role expectations and norms of graduate school and the way that staff perceive mission and change the program as a result of learning from students. Scholars who want to expand this work should consider studying just student participants and include additional theoretical frameworks that allow them to further explore the impact of SDTI across the doctoral academic timeline and institutional practices that support thriving.

In conclusion, it is clear that SDTI has and continues to make the road a little less perilous for doctoral students of color at MSU. It is my prayer that findings from this study will be used to expand the work that SDTI and other programs like it have done to improve the doctoral experience for students of color. It was my goal to tell a story that would have a lasting impact at MSU and to the field of equity and access within graduate education.

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APPENDIX A: IRB APPROVAL LETTER

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Office of Vice Chancellor for Research

Institutional Review Board
528 East Green Street
Suite 203
Champaign, IL 61820

October 22, 2015

Anne Dyson
Ed Organization and Leadership
320 Education Bldg
1310 S. Sixth St.
Champaign, IL 61820
M/C 708

RE: *Socialization in the transition to doctoral study: A Case Study of One Transition Program*
IRB Protocol Number: 16323

EXPIRATION DATE: October 21, 2018

Dear Dr. Dyson:

Thank you for submitting the completed IRB application form for your project entitled *Socialization in the transition to doctoral study: A Case Study of One Transition Program*. Your project was assigned Institutional Review Board (IRB) Protocol Number 16323 and reviewed. It has been determined that the research activities described in this application meet the criteria for exemption at 45CFR46.101(b)(1, 2, 4).

This determination of exemption only applies to the research study as submitted. Please note that additional modifications to your project need to be submitted to the IRB for review and exemption determination or approval before the modifications are initiated.

We appreciate your conscientious adherence to the requirements of human subjects research. If you have any questions about the IRB process, or if you need assistance at any time, please feel free to contact me or the IRB Office, or visit our website at http://www.irb.illinois.edu.

Sincerely,

Dustin L. Yocum

Dustin L. Yocum, Human Subjects Research Specialist, OPRS

c: Randi Congleton

telephone (217) 333-2670 • *fax* (217) 333-0405 • *email* IRB@illinois.edu

APPENDIX B: RECRUITMENT LETTER

December 12, 2015

Dear Previous SDTI Participants (or it will say Faculty or Staff members name),

My name is Randi Congleton and I am a Doctoral student in the department of Education Policy, Organization, and Leadership. I am working on my dissertation this semester towards the completion of my doctorate at the University of Illinois, with a particular research interest in institutional practices that improve or inhibit retention and socialization in graduate students. Through my dissertation project tentatively titled "Socialization in the transition to doctoral study: A case study of one transition program," (IRB # 13623). I am hoping to interview students, faculty, and staff and learn more about ways they have experienced the Summer Doctoral Transition Initiative and its role in transitioning new doctoral students to and through the first year.

I would greatly appreciate your participation. The interview will be conducted at a location on-campus convenient to you and should not require more than one hour of your time. If you are willing to be involved in my research, I'd be pleased to receive your prompt reply as soon as possible. I can be reached at conglet2@illinois.edu or 814.233.1672. Thank you for your consideration.

Randi Congleton
Doctoral student in Higher Education
Education Policy, Organization and Leadership
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Responsible Principle Investigator
Anne Dyson
ahdyson@illinois.edu

APPENDIX C: DATA COLLECTION PROTOCOLS

Interviews

For each participant:
The purpose of this study is to examine the role of SDTI on the transition to and through the first year of doctoral study. Your participation is voluntary and can be discontinued at any time. With your permission, this semi-structured interview will be audio-recorded. You can stop recording at any time. Your name or your department will not be used in the reporting of data. Instead, a pseudonym of your choosing will be used.

Faculty Interview Questions

When you think of SDTI, what comes to your mind?
What motivates you to be involved in SDTI?
Follow-up if needed: How many years have you been an advisor for a student who participated in SDTI?
Talk about your interaction with SDTI staff. Any instances where you have had contact with SDTI staff and administrators.
How would you characterize the relationship between you and SDTI staff?
What is typically the focus of the work that happens during the summer with your SDTI fellow?
How have the students you have worked with heard about the program?
As you think about the SDTI fellows you have had over the years, how would you compare their graduate school readiness with the readiness of those students in your department who have not participated?
Is there anything else about your involvement with or feelings regarding SDTI that you would like to mention?

SDTI Staff Interview Questions

Demographics
- Degree Sought
- Year in school
- Gender
- Department

Background?
Describe your role with SDTI.
How did you become involved with SDTI?
- Follow-up: had any prior knowledge of/expectations/perceptions of what to expect over summer

Why did you become involved with SDTI?
What is the purpose of SDTI?

Talk to me about how you envision your role as a staff member in relationship to the purpose of SDTI?
When you think of SDTI, what comes to your mind?
On the website the purpose of the program is to assist students in acclimating to graduate school. What do you think is meant by acclimation to graduate school?
What is typically the focus of the work that occurs during the summer with SDTI fellows?
Walk me through a typical week for an SDTI student? Versus schedule… (document analysis)
How are the needs of students determined before the program and
How are the needs of students determined throughout the summer as it unfolds? For staff teaching vs. overall conception of the program….
During the program, what is your interaction like with other SDTI staff ?
During the program, can you explain your interaction with SDTI students.
    Follow-up if needed: How about out of SDTI context during the summer?
    During the first year? Follow-up?
How have the students you have worked with heard about the program?
After the summer program is over, what happens for students as it relates to program follow-up?
Describe your interaction with faculty who serve as advisors during the program.
What is the role of culture in SDTI?
What does it mean to be a doctoral student working with new graduate students? Challenges?
Did you gain skills? If so, what skills did you gain?
Dynamics within the community
Respect and building community for granted
Students interaction with faculty members?
Multiple and Marginalized identities, and the role that plays in the transition to graduate school
Does SDTI address identity, how, to what extent…
Is there anything else you would like to share about your role as a staff member for SDTI?

Graduate Administrators Interview Questions

Can you please tell me about your background
How long have you worked with this program?
How would describe your role?
How did SDTI begin?
What is the purpose of SDTI?
What is the mission of SDTI?
How is the summer component of SDTI set up?
    Follow-Up: Various components?
What were the key moments that influenced the development of SDTI?
Who were the major contributors to the development of SDTI?

What else was going on on-campus at the time?
On the website the purpose of the program is to assist students in acclimating to graduate school. What do you mean by acclimation to graduate school?
How are the needs of graduate students determined?
How did you imagine the program?
Can you talk to me about the logistics of the program? Who hires?
Can you talk to me about hiring SDTI staff. How does that happen?
Follow-up: Why do you hire advanced graduate students?
Talk about your interaction with SDTI staff.
Walk me through a typical summer for an SDTI student? Versus schedule… (document analysis)
What is consistent about SDTI and what has changed over the years?
Talk to me about your interaction with faculty advisors. What is that like? Are there challenges?
How do you envision the faculty's role in SDTI?
What are the challenges associated with carrying out SDTI?
What have been the successes?
What happens after the summer component is over? Is there follow-up with the students?

Student interview Questions

Demographic questions

Age
College
Are you a first generation graduate student?
Can you talk a little bit about your background (upbringing) and educational trajectory?

Summer

Why did you decide to pursue a PhD?
Prior to coming to [state], what were your expectations of the PhD?
When did you first hear about SDTI?
What were your expectations of SDTI?
What were your expectations of the department?
What was life like for you prior to coming to [state] and SDTI? (Asked clarifying question…in general…or related to work)
Why did you decide to participate in SDTI?
Please explain to me how the summer was set up? What events occurred, seminars, socials, etc., Where you lived..

Interaction

What was your interaction like with peers during the summer program?
What has your interaction been like with your peers since the summer component of SDTI?
What was your experience like living and interacting with peers in the provided residence hall?

(If the student did not live in provided residence hall) What influenced your living arrangement? How do you think that arrangement influenced your time in SDTI?
During the summer, what expectations did faculty have of you? Of your work?
What expectations did you have for how your time with faculty during the summer would go?

Integration

Please discuss your interaction with the department during your first year?
How did you feel around your peers in the department during the first year?
What is the climate like in your department?
Describe your support system before enrolling in the PhD.
Follow-up if needed: How did your family feel about you coming back to school?
What are the ways in which you have interacted with your family since coming to [state]?
Describe any ways those support systems have changed over time?
What do you think your transition would have been like if you didn't participate in SDTI?
Explain your interaction with SDTI after the summer program was over? (took it as any involvement, not necessarily follow-up).

Learning

Please explain to me what if any lessons you have learned as a result of participating in SDTI?
Describe any barriers that you have encountered during your transition to and through the first year? How did you work through it?
How responsive was SDTI to your needs in the transition to graduate school?

First Year

What role if any do you believe identity or multiple identities played during your transition to graduate school?
Academic Norms
Expectations of graduate school
Social Interactions

Influences

What would you say influenced your success during the first-year of the PhD?
If you could go back, Is there anything you would tell yourself coming in that you have now realized after participating in the summer and going through your first year?
Is there anything else that you would like to share about your time in SDTI?
Navigating your first year?

APPENDIX D: INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

Informed Consent

Socialization in the Transition to Doctoral Study: A Case Study of One Transition Program

You are invited to participate in the above entitled research study. This study is being conducted by Randi Congleton, Doctoral Student in the Department of Education Policy, Organization and Leadership at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. This study will examine socialization in the transition to doctoral study and through the first year as experienced by students who participated in the Summer Doctoral Transition Initiative (SDTI).

Participation within this study is voluntary. If you choose to participate in this study, you are asked to consent by signing this form or verbally via phone (if you participate by phone) after all of your questions have been answered. Interviews are will last for approximately an hour. Interviews will be audio taped (if you give consent), and later transcribed for further analysis. Interviews will be scheduled at the participant's convenience. Part of the overall research design will include reviewing the program website and program documents.

Results from this study may be used for research presentations and professional journal publications. The primary benefit of this study is to help the researcher to better understand the support in the transition and how students come to understand the values, expectations of doctoral study, as experienced by doctoral students of color. This information will help to provide faculty and administrators develop a deeper understanding of the structures, supports and practices that may lead to higher levels of engagement and inclusion during the transition to doctoral study and through the very critical first year.

There are no foreseeable risks other than responding to questions to which you are uncomfortable answering. In anticipating such a case, you may choose not to answer specific questions. You may also discontinue participation in the project at any time without prejudice. You must be 18 years of age or older to participate in the investigation. While you will not derive any direct benefits from your participation in the project, you will be contributing information that may lead to knowledge about doctoral students new to predominantly white institutions and the support required to facilitate a smooth transition.

Every effort will be made to keep all of your information confidential. You will be given a pseudonym for interview data that you provide that is used within the study. In general, we will not tell anyone any information about you. When this research is discussed or published, no one will know that you were in the study. However, laws and university rules might require us to tell certain people about you. For example, your records from this research may be seen or copied by the following people or groups:

- Representatives of the university committee and office that reviews and approves research studies, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and Office for Protection of Research Subjects;
- · Other representatives of the state and university responsible for ethical, regulatory, or financial oversight of research;

Every effort will be made to ensure that both parties will not be viewed in a negative light. Audiotapes and transcriptions will be kept on a password protected, personal computer in Champaign, IL. Data that is collected will be kept for a period no less than five years, and will then be destroyed. Discrete typist(s) are the only individuals, other than the responsible project investigator and research team member, who will have access to the data.

Questions about this research can be addressed at any time by calling or writing Dr. Anne Dyson, Department of Education Policy, Organization and Leadership, 1310 S. 6th st, 366 Education, Champaign, IL 61821 (phone: 217-244-5040 or e-mail: ahdyson@illinois.edu). If you desire additional information about your rights as a participant, please feel free to contact the UIUC Institutional Review Board Office at 217-333-2670 or irb@illinois.edu.

Completion of this form indicates that you have read and plan to participate in this study. You can still participate in the study even if you do not want to be audio-recorded. A copy of this informed consent will be made available immediately upon request.

DO NOT TAKE PART IN ANY INTERVIEWS UNTIL YOU HAVE COMPLETELY READ THIS DOCUMENT

Permission to audio-record the interview (Please check one): Yes:_____ No:_____

Participant Signature:_____

Date:_____

Researcher Signature:_____

Date:_____

APPENDIX E: ORIGINAL SDTI GRANT

Figure E.1. Original SDTI proposal

PROPOSAL AND PLAN

INTRODUCTION

Each year the receives applications from talented underrepresented students from diverse academic backgrounds and with a variety of interests in graduate study. Most of these students are never accepted in programs that are offered by departments on this campus as a result of either test scores, gpa's or other measures that *imply* weaknesses in their academic preparedness. Approximately 599 minority applications were received by this past year. Of the total minority applications for fall enrollment 1998, graduate departments admitted 198 students and 146 enrolled.

MINORITY GROUP	APPLIED	ADMITTED	ENROLLED
Native American Indian	12	8	8
African American	340	110	80
Latino	247	80	58

▪ *Application number as of June 22, 1998; Enrollment numbers as of October 19, 1998*

While these numbers are approximations, they represent the trend in applications to enrollments experienced annually on this campus. The percentage of new graduate students enrolling at our institutions by ethnicity is roughly 23% for Latino and African Americans. The numbers of Native American applicants are typically very low making the percentage of applicants admitted and enrolled appear larger. In 1998, 66% of Native American applicants were admitted and 66% enrolled. Thirty-two percent of Latino and African American students who apply are admitted to graduate programs. Approximately 72% of those admitted will enroll. This implies that the low numbers in minority student enrollment are at least partly the result of students being denied admission by departments rather than the interest on the part of minority students. Others who are admitted may decide not to enroll because they are unfamiliar with the campus, faculty, etc.

There is evidence that students who are first-generation and low-income are underrepresented in graduate study, irrespective of their ethnic background. Limited exposure to the culture and expectations of graduate school frequently affects students' preparation for advanced education. Often we find that those students who may be talented enough to meet the challenges of their chosen discipline have difficulty gaining admission as a result of their undergraduate gpa or entrance exam scores. The absence of early exposure (parents who have completed advanced degrees, etc.) to the graduate school process often prohibits students who are first-generation and low-income from enrolling in graduate programs. These particular circumstances, along with gpa and entrance exam scores as measures of academic preparation, have contributed significantly to the low numbers of minority students, as well as first-generation and low-income students, who pursue graduate study. These factors may also, to a great extent, explain the drop in the number of students who apply to graduate programs compared to those who are ultimately admitted.

Several programs have been developed over the past 10-13 years that encourage and prepare minority students for graduate study. Programs like the Program) and the Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program (McNair) have become very useful in increasing minority and first-generation and low-income student enrollments, nationally. The McNair program has as part of its objective to serve students that are first-generation and low-income, as well students who are from minority groups underrepresented in graduate study. Students who meet one or both of these criteria along with the departmental recommendation would be candidates for the

2

Figure E.1. Original SDTI proposal continued

Participants in these summer programs learn what is expected of them as a student in graduate school. These students have demonstrated strong academic ability prior to their admissions into the summer research programs and are prepared for the rigors of graduate study. Students from such programs are among the most attractive and promising students for participation in graduate study in all disciplines. A major concern for administrators involved with these summer programs is the lack of awareness of the quality of McNair and participants and their readiness for graduate education. Institutions like the d the supported the admissions of underrepresented students in graduate programs through their summer institutes for more than ten years. The f Regents Summer Program and the I Summer Institute have been established to provide underrepresented students an advanced opportunity to prepare for the expectations of their graduate program

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

In an effort to address departmental recruiting and enrollment needs, the Graduate College has established an advisory committee. The committee will meet throughout the academic year to assist in the development of program activities, criteria for eligibility, the relevant content of the seminars and workshops, etc. This team of faculty and administrators from graduate departments will be useful in providing the broader base needs for education in each of the targeted disciplines. In the pilot year of the program, faculty and administrators from Math, Sciences, and Engineering programs will be represented on the advisory committee. The specific responsibilities of the committee include: defining the needs of departments, assisting with the structure and content of the program, reviewing applications of students applying to the program, identifying students from the pool of graduate school applications who would benefit most from the program., and making recommendations for program improvement. Several faculty and administrators have committed to serving on the committee this year. To date, t ry given notice of their willingness to serve.

PURPOSE OF THE SUMMER

The purpose of the is to provide incoming underrepresented minority graduate students and students who are first generation and low-income with a well-structured undergraduate to graduate school transition experience. The Summer Institute will allow for the rapid acclimation of the student to the campus, their respective departments, graduate school culture, and the requirements of their disciplines. Participants in the Summer Institute will become acquainted with graduate life on the campus by:

1) Working closely with Graduate College administrators

2) Meeting and working with faculty and advisors in their departments of study

3) Learning necessary skills for a successful graduate school experience in their discipline

4) Interacting with their peers within the academic community

WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE

Participants in the Summer hould be students who have been admitted to graduate study at or who are under consideration for admission. Students will also need to be recommended by their department. We will target at least seven students who are residents of the State of to participate in the program with the remaining eight accepted from other

Figure E.1. Original SDTI proposal continued

institutions from across the U.S. and Puerto Rico. Students who are eligible for the ... uates of one of the ...), and students who have participated in the ...or in a McNair Program would be among the first selected. Other underrepresented students would be eligible based on a recommendation from a graduate department or the Graduate College. The 1999 program will be a pilot program and will concentrate in areas where minorities are most underepresented--Math, Science, and Engineering.

WHAT WOULD BE REQUIRED OF THE NOMINEE

- The prospective Summer participant would complete an application for admission to a program of study by the deadline date.
- A letter of support from the department, particularly if not yet admitted
- Upon gaining admission to the department, the student would agree to participate in the Summer
- The student would participate in all of the activities of the Summer Institute Program

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

There would be four major activities that would be provided the student that would introduce them to graduate study:

1) Preparatory coursework/required courses recommended by department

✓ Preliminary courses that could include independent studies or upper division courses that might strengthen the student's knowledge base.

2) Research Methodologies

✓ An introduction to various methods of approaching research and the research design process. This workshop could also include expanded literature searches and basic technical research development.

3) Scientific and Technical Writing Skills

✓ Involves the written communication of scientific information in the form of reports, proposals, research writing, and other related communications.

4) Seminars on topics such as:
   - ✓ Financial aid and financial management
   - ✓ Choosing a research advisor
   - ✓ Campus support networks and faculty mentoring
   - ✓ Publishing and Presenting research
   - ✓ The culture of graduate school
   - ✓ Research ethics

BENEFITS GAINED FROM THE PROGRAM

The eight-week summer program would give participants a head start on graduate study at ?articipants will be given an opportunity to work with their assigned research advisor or a faculty mentor in their department. Early introduction to the department will assist the student in becoming socialized to the departmental culture and allow them an opportunity to learn what is expected of them as a graduate student in that particular program. The student would be allowed to enroll in specific courses recommended by the department to strengthen the student's preparation. Other benefits include:

Figure E.1. Original SDTI proposal continued

1. An opportunity to conduct focused research with the guidance of an experienced researcher in their discipline

2. The opportunity to strengthen their scholarly writing skills

3. A chance to explore a topic that could ultimately develop into a dissertation topic or an article for publication

4. An opportunity to meet and network with other students who have similar interests, needs, and academic goals

At several intervals in the participants' progress through their program of study, assessments of the usefulness of the program in students' understanding of the graduate school culture, professional development, and intellectual/academic growth will be performed. These assessments will be used to determine the kinds of activities that are needed to meet the needs of participants and ways in which to improve the program, in general.

COSTS

Students would be provided a stipend of $2,500.00 to cover their summer expenses and support for their full participation in of the program. In addition, students would receive health insurance coverage through Health Center and provided a tuition waiver for coursework approved by their respective department. Tuition for the Summer Session II term is based on the average cost of one unit of coursework.

Travel allowances for the participants would also be provided. The chart below provides a breakdown of the cost of serving students who are residents and those who are not. The cost of travel would average around $500.00 per out-of-state student (non-residents) and $100.00 would be provided to esidents for round-trip travel to and from campus.

Students who intend to reside on campus and not secure an apartment would be housed in Hall. The cost of housing, which does not include a meal plan, would be approximately $770.00 for the 1999 summer session II term (eight weeks). Some students may choose to reside off-campus, particularly graduates of who may be required to maintain leasing agreements. Students residing off-campus would be provided the $770.00 to assist with their housing costs, as well.

Administrative costs would cover academic/collegial activities, printing of materials, and most other administrative items. The cost of supporting a student in the Summer Institute is as follows:

Illinois Residents	
Expense	**Amount**
Stipend	$ 2,500.00
Travel	$ 100.00
Housing	$ 770.00
Tuition	$ 530.00
Administrative	$ 130.00
Total	$ 4,030.00
Total Program Cost	$28,210.00

Non-Residents	
Expense	**Amount**
Stipend	$ 2,500.00
Travel	$ 500.00
Housing	$ 770.00
Tuition	$ 1,400.00
Administrative	$ 130.00
Total	$ 5,300.00
Total Program Cost	$ 42,400.00

For 15 students in the 1999 pilot program, we anticipate the overall costs to be **$70,610.00** for the eight- week program. The Total Program Cost takes into account the average expense of serving eight students from visiting campuses and seven students fron .

SDTI: Culture of Graduate School Summer 2014

Instructor: Carlos

Contact Information:

Office Hours: Monday: 12pm – 2pm; Tuesday: 9am – 10:30am and 12pm – 2:30pm in 25A English Building (across from vending machines). I am also available by appointment.

Meeting Time and Location: Monday: 10:00am to Noon

Required Texts: *Behind the Academic Curtain: How to Find Success and Happiness with a PhD* by Frank E. Furstenberg and *Getting What You Came For: The Smart Student's Guide to Earning A Master's of Ph.D.* by Robert L. Peters.

Seminar Description: The Culture of Graduate School seminar will complement SDTI experience. Using the text *Behind the Academic Curtain: How to Find Success and Happiness with a PhD* we will discuss the academic pathway students will experience during your tenure as a doctoral student (specifically at MSU).
There will also be presentations by faculty and campus administration. Through these presentations and in conjunction with the text; these discussions will enhance your understanding of what it takes to be successful as a graduate student as well as encourage you to take advantage of every opportunity afforded.

Expectations: Fellows are required to come to seminar having read the required text and journal articles for the week. This will aid in ensuring effective class participation and having meaningful open dialogue.

Assignments: There will be several assignments which will help prepare you for your graduate career. These assignments are meant to serve as a planning guide to ensure that you are successful on the Illinois campus. Links to websites pertinent to seminar and journal articles will be sent via email.

Table F.1 Culture of Graduate School Syllabus

Seminar Date	Topic and Assignment(s)
June 9, 2014	**Reading before class:** *Behind the Academic Curtain: How to Find Success and Happiness with a PhD* – Preface & Chapter 1; *Getting What You Came For: The Smart Student's Guide to Earning A Master's of Ph.D.* – Chapters 1 – 6. **Assignment before class:** Develop minimum three (3) questions about the graduate school experience you would like discussed this summer. Fellows may email questions to instructor prior to class.
	In-class Discussion/Presentation: • Faculty Member, PhD (SHEB). Review academic profile sent via email prior to class. • Review of *Culture of Graduate School* syllabus. **Assignment:** • Schedule appointment with graduate or program advisor to introduce yourself and discuss dissertation interests, academic goals, and program benchmarks. These meetings should occur within the first three (3) weeks of the summer. However, some advisors may only be available by email due to travel. • Outline Academic Goals for Graduate Career
June 16, 2014	**Reading before class:** *Getting What You Came For: The Smart Student's Guide to Earning A Master's of Ph.D.* – those whom will earn Master's degree first read chapters 10 and 11; those whom have earned a Master's already read chapter 11; all Fellows read chapters 12, 16, and 17. **In-class Discussion/Presentation:** • U Graduate Student Insurance Presentation • SDTI Fellow narratives • Unpacking and perspective to week 1 and 2 readings **Assignment:** • Review the Graduate Student Handbook (link sent via email); Graduate Student Handbook for your department (varies). • Graduate Plan (worksheet handed out in class)

Table F.1 Culture of Graduate School Syllabus

June 23, 2014	**Reading before class:** *Getting What You Came For: The Smart Student's Guide to Earning A Master's of Ph.D.* – chapters 21, 22, and 23 **In-class Discussion/Presentation:** Graduate Student Panel (Featuring current MSU PhD Students/Candidates) **Assignment:** • Review the Graduate College Fellowships Office website. Make note of both campus and external fellowships that would be of interest. Your department may also have a fellowships listing on their website. • Review Graduate College Assistantship and Graduate Hourly positions
June 30, 2014	**Reading:** *Behind the Academic Curtain: How to Find Success and Happiness with a PhD* – Chapter 2 & 3; *Getting What You Came For: The Smart Student's Guide to Earning A Master's of Ph.D.* – Chapter 9 and 20.
	In-class Discussion/Presentation: • Applying for Campus & External Fellowships –Graduate College Fellowships Office. • Applying for Assistantships/Graduate Hourly Positions • Understanding Financial Aid as a Graduate Student • Summer Research Symposium (SRS) **Assignment:** • Identify professional and social organizations related to your field of study (and or interests). • Outline conferences that pertain to your research interests • Research journals for future publication of your work

Table F.1 Culture of Graduate School Syllabus

July 7, 2014	**Reading before class:** *Behind the Academic Curtain: How to Find Success and Happiness with a PhD* – Chapter 4; *Getting What You Came For: The Smart Student's Guide to Earning A Master's of Ph.D.* – Chapter 13. **In-class Discussion/Presentation:** • Understanding Tuition Waivers & Taxes – Presentation Payroll and Benefits Office • Building Professional Relationships and Developing Opportunities as a PhD Student **Assignment:** Research opportunities in your department that provide graduate students for professional development. Speak with other graduate students and ask for their input on making the most of your time on campus. Look outside of your department – opportunities are endless.
July 14, 2014	**Reading before class:** *Getting What You Came For: The Smart Student's Guide to Earning A Master's of Ph.D.* – chapters 14, 15, 18, and 19. **In-class Discussion/Presentation:** • Academic Expectations: Graduate Program and Graduate College Deadlines • Course Load Requirements • Exam Schedule (varies by department and varies by benchmark) • Understanding the Dissertation Process **Assignment:** None.
July 21, 2014	**Reading before class:** *Behind the Academic Curtain: How to Find Success and Happiness with a PhD* – Chapter 5; *Getting What You Came For: The Smart Student's Guide to Earning A Master's of Ph.D.* – chapter 24. **In-class Discussion/Presentation:** • Financial Planning and Wellness – Presentation Consumer Economics Educator, MSU • Planning for Success: Reflection and Practice **Assignment:** None.

SDTI
Summer 2014
Professional Development in Graduate School

"Let us not be content to wait and see what will happen, but give us the determination to make the right things happen" (Horace Mann).

Sounia
Class Location:
Email:
Office Hours: Available upon request

Introduction to Course

Professional development encompasses many elements of the graduate school experience; your coursework, research, presentations, and publications form just one component. Professional development also includes elements of personal development such as career development, self-awareness (your understanding of your strengths and opportunities for development), leadership, and professional adaptability (your ability to apply skills learned in one context in a new environment, sometimes called critical thinking).

This course is rooted in the belief that graduate training and the experience is holistic. For this reason, throughout this course, we will visit, deconstruct, and reconstruct various personal and professional aspects of professional development. As such, we will work on critical consciousness of self as a scholar as well as tangible professional developments, such as resume/cv reviews, personal teaching and research statements, as well as ways to become connected on campus and at professional conferences.

Goals for Discussion

The ultimate goal of section is to grow as scholars, as people, and to ensure that you feel as prepared as possible entering this phase of your graduate work. Our class discussions will be what we make of them.

Counseling Services

There are often many pressures and stresses associated with balancing school, work, family, life, and all the complexities in our lives. If you are having personal difficulties, please consider the University Counseling Center. For more information on the Counseling Center check out the following web site,

Table F.2. Professional Development course outline

CLASS	DATE	SUBJECT	LOCATION	ASSIGNMENT DUE
1	Wed, June 4	Working in Groups & Teams		
2	Wed, June 11	"Handle your Business!": CVs, Resumes, & Business Cards		1) 3 pg. personal self refection paper 2) Full draft of resume/CV
3	Wed, June 18	Research/Teaching/Personal Statement		1) Letter to self 2) Set up Mandatory 30 minute office hour session to review CV/Resume
4	Wed, June 25	Panel of Scholars: "Connecting, navigating, and negotiating professional relations on campus"/Academic visibility		Research/Teaching/Personal Statement
5	Wed, July 2	Effective Research Presentations and Conference Etiquette		
6	Wed, July 9	Professional Development: Career Services		Polished "elevator speech"
7	Wed, July 16	Poster Session Evaluation Training		

Table F.3. Professional Development assignment overview

DUE DATE	ASSIGNMENT DETAILS	FORMAT
June 11	1) Cultural self reflection paper focused on document what has shaped the person & scholar you are today. Please critically engage salient/non-salient identities, personal/family experiences, beliefs, etc. -3 pages -Double spaced -Times New Roman -1 inch margins all around -Cover page with name, date, program -APA formatting 2) Polished CV or resume document	1) Word sent to 2) Word sent to
June 18	Letter to self focused on: -Why are you entering this graduate work? -How do you feel about being here? -What do you hope to gain/lose from being here? -What are you worried about? Challenges? -What are you hopeful about? -Who will you be at the end of SDTI?	Typed/hand-written & submit hard copy in envelope with first & last name & email on front of envelope **Seal envelope**
June 25	Personal Statement -or- Research Statement -or- Teaching Statement -1 page, typed, Times New Roman	Word sent to
July 9	Prepare and polish "elevator speech" -60 seconds max	Be prepared to verbally present elevator speech

The Graduate College
2014 SDTI

Seminar on Research Writing for the Social Science, Humanities, Education, and Business

****

Meetings: M 6-8pm Facilitator: Elsa Office Hours: TBD

Individual Meetings: TBD Email: Office: TBD

****

Course Description and Format

The writing course for SHEB seeks to further expand students' skills and knowledge in written forms that serve as a foundation for future coursework and research. Specifically, weekly group seminars will focus on different writing genres most commonly approached during graduate studies. These will be interactive sessions promoting dialogue and participation. There may be a possibility in which guest speakers will be invited. Close guidance related to individual research projects will be provided on a weekly basis. In addition, students will have the opportunity to work during set writing time blocks if they choose to do so.

Course Objectives

- Become comfortable with the writing process at an academic and a personal level.
- Engage in the practice and development of writing in, and for, academia.
- Explore and model different writing samples commonly used in graduate studies.
- Transform research ideas into organized, coherent writing pieces.
- Produce a journal length, academic quality research paper.

Class Participation and Evaluation

Individual success thrives from meaningful, respectful, collaborative success. As part of your SDTI summer contract, all students are required to attend weekly Monday Seminars in their entirety. During this period, you will be encouraged to contribute to discussion, think critically, and raise questions as need be. You will be required to complete assignments and come prepared to engage in the topic to be covered. Disrespectful behavior –in any fashion– toward the facilitator and/or fellow scholars will not be tolerated. Individual or small group sessions as well as set writing times are optional, flexible, yet highly encouraged. The majority of assignment explanations will not take the approach of 'this is how to do it now go do it'. Instead, work will be assigned and then work-shopped after submission, in small groups and with the larger group as well.

Class Evaluation

While students will not receive a letter grade for the Seminar on Research Writing in SHEB, they will be expected to work toward this mindset. Each student will get as much feedback as desired, within the time frames available on a weekly basis. Facilitator's feedback on each student's participation and performance will be given to the SDTI Coordinator on a regular basis.

Table F.4. Schedule of Readings and Assignments*

DAY	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT	HOMEWORK
M June 9th 6-8	Introductions Seminar Overview	Icebreaker Questionnaire/ Needs Assessment Activity on Revision (informs writing)	*Identify and read at least 2 book reviews of your interest. *Submit no more than a 1-page reflection of why you chose the book, what caught your attention, the writing style, tone, and audience of the author, etc. *This piece does not have to be formal. Feel free to be as creative as you wish at describing and documenting your thoughts. **Preferred Deadline: On or before Friday, June 13th, 5pm.** *Continue working toward your research paper.
M June 16th 6-8	Book Review	TBD	*Before the next seminar, visit the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) *Familiarize yourself with APA, MLA, and Chicago Formatting stlyes https://owl.english.purdue.edu/ *Start and continue to read PHD to Ph.D. *Continue working toward your research paper.
M June 23rd 6-8	Formatting styles/Citations	Close reading of article on formatting styles Handouts/formatting machines, etc.	*Identify and read 2-4 journal articles related to your research interest. *Write a 1-page response paper of the readings, according to what *you* think is most important to include. **Preferred Deadline: On or before Friday, June 27th, 5pm.** *Continue working toward your research paper.

Table F.4. Schedule of Readings and Assignments continued

DAY	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT	HOMEWORK
M June 30th 6-8	Reading Responses (focus on purpose and style, prompt questions, critique vs. summary) Informal Early Feedback Brief introduction to annotated bibliographies, handout.	Deconstructing Prompts Anonymous group reflections Self-evaluations on writing Others: TBD	*Work with 2 of the same journal articles identified for the reading response OR (preferable) find 2 different articles that still relate to your research interest. In addition, identify at least 1 article that has an opposite argument of what you want to focus on. *To be sure, every student will need at lest 3 articles for this assignment in which 1 will be new for everyone. The remaining 2 can be from the previous week or can be new, so that you add to your literature review. *Write a 1-page annotated bibliography for each article. Refer to handout and the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) for more assistance. We will workshop the annotated bibliographies during the next seminar meeting. **Preferred Deadline: On or before Friday, July 3rd, 5pm.** *Continue reading PHD to Ph.D. Book review due on or before Monday, July 7th, 5pm. *Continue working toward your research paper.
M July 7th 6-8	Annotated Bibliography PHD to Ph.D.	Workshop annotated bibliographies Read excerpt from book, if time allows Discuss reactions to book, engage in conversation related to education process, writing ideologies, and progressing in graduate school and after	**Book review due Monday, July 7th, 5pm.** Continue working toward your research paper.
DAY	**TOPIC**	**ASSIGNMENT**	**HOMEWORK**
M July 14th 6-8	Literature Review	TBD	*Bring in what you have thus far of your research paper in order to share and receive feedback. *Continue working toward your research paper.

Note on office hours:

I will be approaching office hours in both administrative and guidance terms. The following breakdown is how I envision facilitation outside of the weekly seminar settings. It is subject to change after initial seminar meeting. Of course, individual appointments can be made according to students' needs.

- 1 office hour (time and location TBD) to discuss general seminar issues, assignments, etc.
- 1.5 guidance hours (time and location TBD) for specific research papers. The first hour will be dedicated to working together and/or in small groups related to the progress of your final paper. Slots will be allotted during the following half hour in case students want to talk on a one-on-one basis.
- 1 'guidance' hour (time and location TBD) for tracking time to write. Although it is only an hour, students may want to consider this as a way of implementing writing practices that will extend to daily blocks of time. Further explanation will be given during the initial seminar meeting and may be subject to change thereafter.

Note on the Summer Research Symposium

I ***highly*** encourage all scholars to take advantage of the summer, seminar meetings, guided office hours, and the SDTI experience overall in ways that work toward presenting at the Summer Research Symposium (SRS). Despite this being an option this year, submitting your work and partaking in the Symposium is an excellent opportunity to showcase yourself, your hard work and dedication, and your research. It is a great starting point to add to your CV as a way of representing MSU.

Figure F.1 SDTI Mentoring schedule

Mentoring

Date	Event
Monday, November 3rd 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.	Kick-off Lunch
Thursday, November 20th 5:00 - 6:30 p.m.	Music & Wine Tasting
Tuesday, December 2nd 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.	Grad Mentoring Workshop: Advanced Grad Student Panel
Wednesday, January 28th 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.	Alumni Focus With Guest Speaker
Tuesday, February 17th 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.	Grad Mentoring Workshop:
Wednesday, March 18th 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.	Alumni Focus With Guest Speaker
April 6th 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.	Grad Student Appreciation Event
Thursday, May 14th 5:30 - 7:00 p.m.	Congratulatory Ceremony

APPENDIX G: STUDENT PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS

Table G.1 Student program expectation

Participant	Discipline	SDTI Expectations
Lamar	Social Sciences, Humanities, Education, Business	I was expecting it to be a bit more intensive, and more hands on with the advisors I was placed with. I didn't expect the extra that came with the program such as explaining the benefit like showing you around campus. And some of that stuff was really cool
Mary	STEM	My masters work was very consulting, like we just worked for [closest major city to MSU], I made models, it was not going into a literature review, to create a project from scratch. So I thought SDTI could help me with that and I thought a network of people that I really hadn't had access to before.
Erica	Social Sciences, Humanities, Education, and Business	Expected it to be research intensive. I expected that I was kind of supposed to overnight become a different researcher and I expected to kind of form bonds with people.
Angela	STEM	I didn't know what to expect. I knew it was for underrepresented students, but I figured even just in general that, I felt more especially that the liberal arts background was what I needed to transition from.
Monica	Social Sciences, Humanities, Education, and Business	I have a history of doing programs like this. I expected to get acclimated to the culture of campus. I realized that even if you were a high achieving student, it's good to establish a cohort of peers and put your head in the game.
Roberto	Social Sciences, Humanities, Education, and Business	I didn't know much about it. I knew that it was a paid opportunity and I was taking a course. I needed the money, you know? I anticipated that it was gonna be rigorous.
Oliver	Social Sciences, Humanities, Education, and Business	I expected to get a head start on research more than anything. I wanted to take advantage of working with a professor. I expected to meet a bunch of people. I figured a few of us would be cool, but because I had my wife with me I didn't necessarily need to create really strong friendships. And the people looked like me so that was nice.
Brian	Social Sciences, Humanities, Education, and Business	Get acclimated to college, learn about the dynamics of the institution. I thought we were gonna be in different classes to learn about the different structures of the university, we are gonna meet professors.
Christina	STEM	I didn't really have any expectations. I didn't know because I was also here participating in [another program]. So instead of independent research I was doing [the other program] and SDTI. Part of it was funding, and it felt like a baby step into grad life.
Sherry	STEM	I didn't know anything about it. I thought that it would be a great way to get started on research, and understand the PhD process. I'd been exposed to research in the past and some of my own but not as detailed as it will get in the future. I also thought it would be nice to have something else to do besides just working.
Adjua	Social Sciences, Humanities, Education, and Business	I mean, I knew what it was, I just figured it would help me to get started in my research. That's what I was thinking.
Donovan	Social Sciences, Humanities, Education, and Business	Just to give me the guidelines of what it means to be successful in grad school. I didn't really have much expectations, I just knew that it was a program that was going to benefit me but my own personal outcomes was to know how to adapt to the graduate school life especially fresh out of undergrad.
Roxanne	Social Sciences, Humanities, Education, and Business	I knew that I was going to have to take a class, and I didn't know what that class was going to be like. So, for me, that the only thing I could focus on, was the fact that I had to take this class at this internationally renowned university, and I was going to be stuck in a dorm.
Faith	Social Sciences, Humanities, Education, and Business	I read the website, and to be honest, I didn't think that it would be useful to me. I thought that it would be mostly a good chance to meet new people and so my expectation was, you are going to get there, I know it's going to be some type of structured things that we could do together as groups and do independent research with my advisor, and mostly expected to meet new people.
Jerome	STEM	I expected to be introduced to my advisor, to get a working relationship with her and become adjusted to the campus and just meet a good group of people that I can kind of establish relationships with to kind of keep me sane when I feel alone.
Joshua	Social Sciences, Humanities, Education, and Business	I didn't have any expectations. I knew I was glad to be leaving [close major city]. I was focused and I wanted to begin immediately. I taught my last class a few weeks before [SDTI] started. So I made a conscious effort and I understood it would be difficult, so there was a bit for fortitude that I thought I had and I thought I was prepared put not really prepared for [SDTI].